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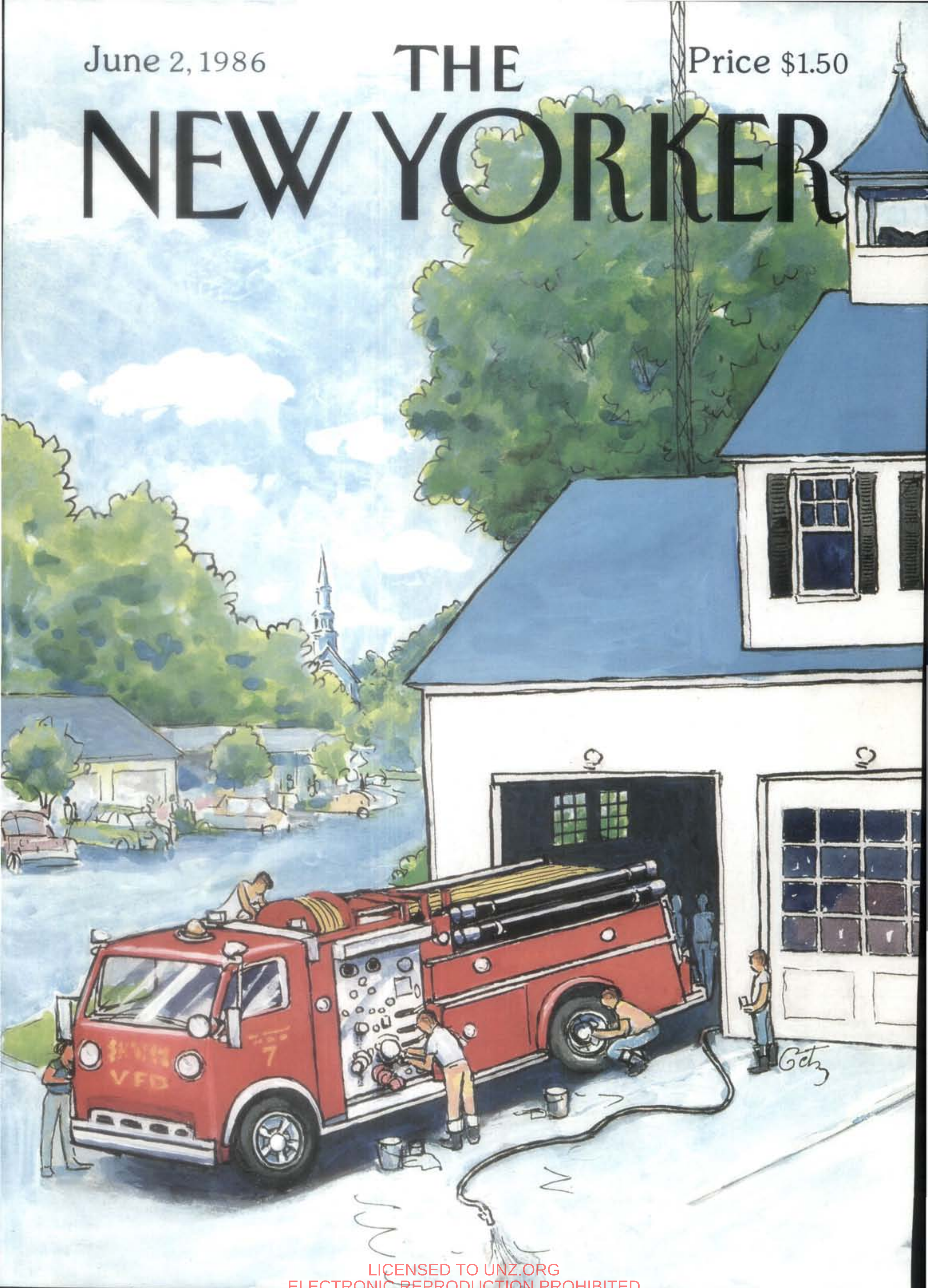

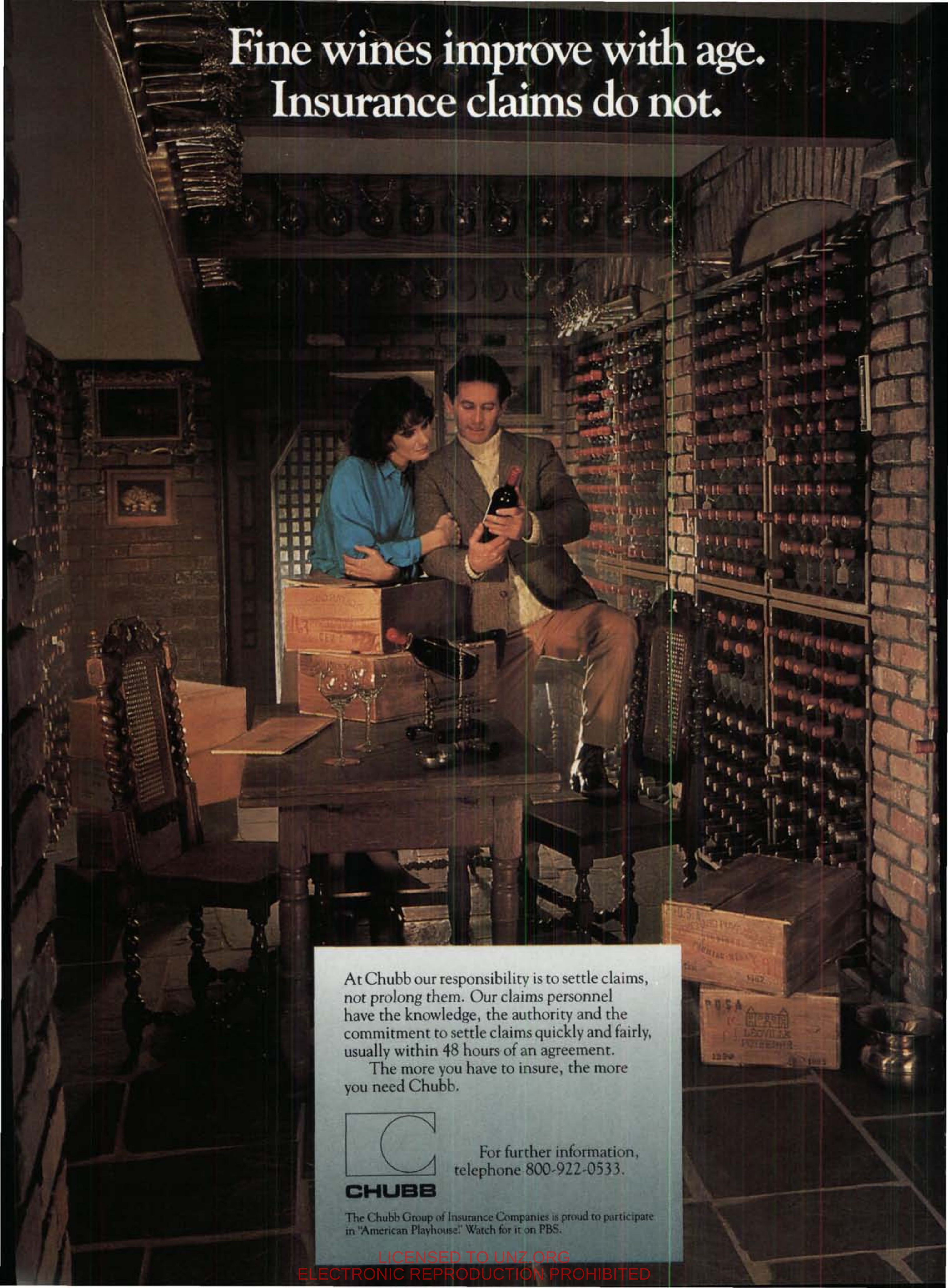

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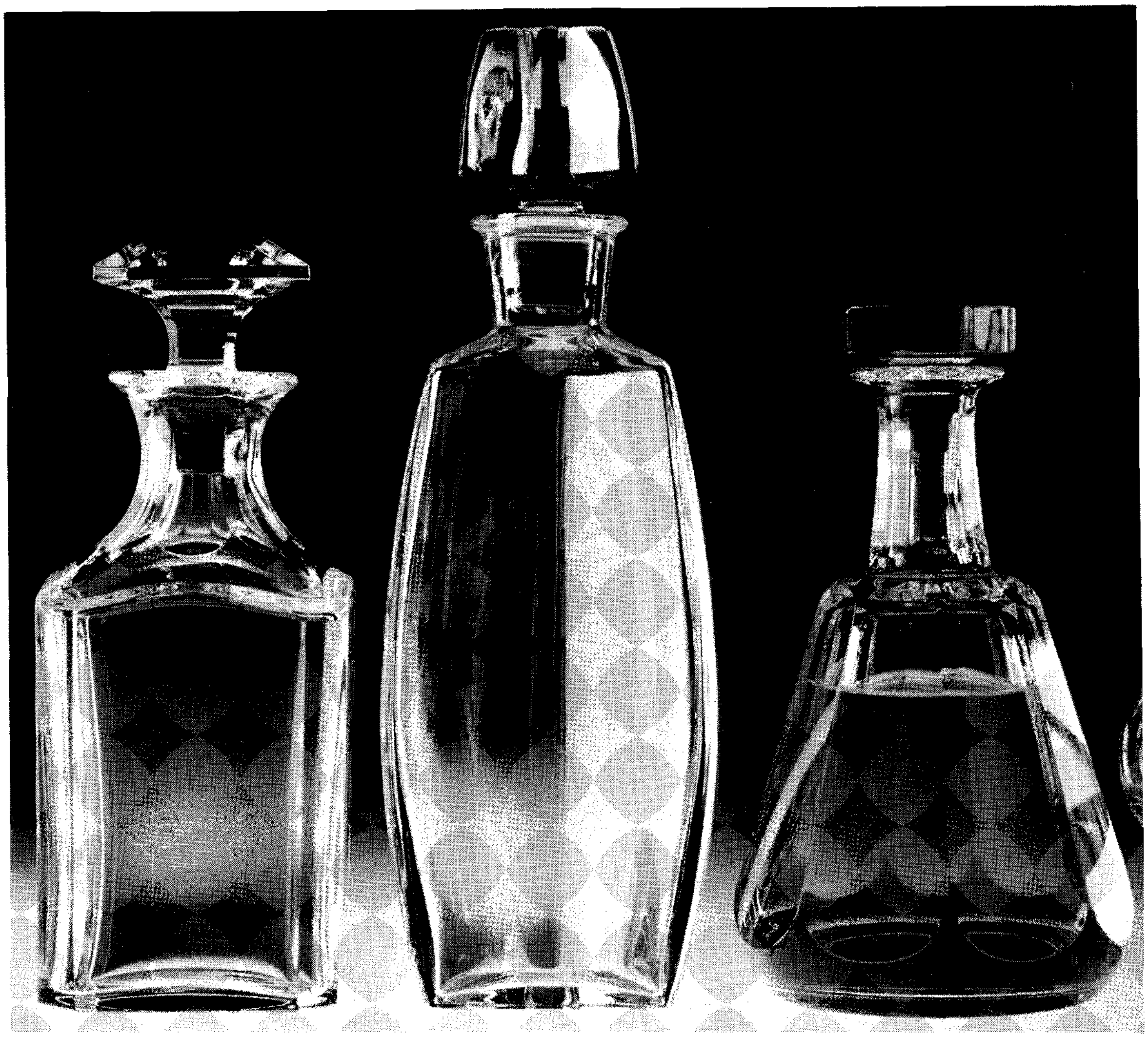

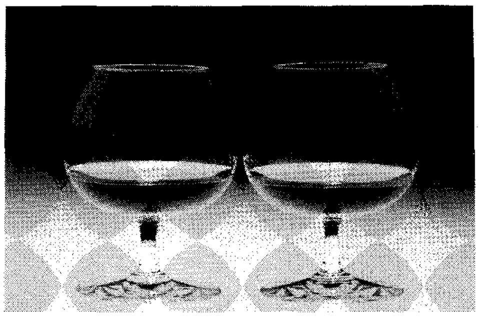

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

The Acting Company—A four-week engagement by John Houseman's troupe. **TEN BY TENNESSEE,** two bills of one-act plays by Tennessee Williams. "The Lady of Larkspur Lotion," "Talk to Me Like the Rain," "Portrait of a Madonna," "The Unsatisfactory Supper," and "The Long Goodbye": Wednesday, May 28, and Friday, May 30, at 8; Saturday, May 31, at 2; and Sunday, June 1, Tuesday, June 3, Thursday, June 5, and Saturday, June 7, all at 8. (Reviewed in this issue.) . . . ¶ "Auto-da-Fé," "The Strangest Kind of Romance," "A Perfect Analysis Given by a Parrot," "This Property Is Condemned," and "I Can't Imagine Tomorrow": Thursday, May 29, and Saturday, May 31, at 8; Sunday, June 1, at 3; Wednesday, June 4, and Friday, June 6, at 8; and Saturday, June 7, at 2. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Through Sunday, June 15.)

Aunt Dan & Lemon—A series of extended conversations about good and evil, interspersed with melodrama. The author is Wallace Shawn and the admirable direction is by Max Stafford-Clark. With Pamela Reed and Pippa Pearthree. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/4/85.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Benefactors—The moral of this harsh and yet continuously entertaining play by Michael Frayn is that no good deed goes unpunished. The cast consists of Glenn Close, Sam Waterston, Mary Beth Hurt, and Simon Jones, and the direction is by Michael Blakemore. (1/6/86) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Big Deal—Bob Fosse's bewildering attempt to transform an old Italian movie into a contemporary Broadway musical is made all the more bewildering by his use of old American songs in new tempos. The Fosse choreography remains brilliant and the cast is apparently unfazed by the bizarre activities it is called upon to carry out. (4/21/86) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays, except June 1, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3; special matinée Wednesday, May 28, at 2.)

The Boys in Autumn—A wretched little non-play about the late years of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. Unaccountably, George C. Scott and John Cullum have consented to appear in it. The author is Bernard Sabath. (5/12/86) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Chopin Playoffs—A comedy by Israel Horovitz, presented by the American Jewish Theatre. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Tuesdays through Thursdays and Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, June 15. For tickets, call 831-8603.)

Cuba and His Teddy Bear—Robert De Niro is a Hispanic drug dealer (cocaine), who is bringing up his teen-age son. Reinaldo Povod's first play is considerably better than promising; Mr. De Niro's performance is remarkable, and he is well supported by Burt Young, Ralph Macchio, and Paul Calderon. Bill Hart directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Saturday, June 14.)

Ensemble Studio Theatre—A festival of one-act plays. "Dolores," by Edward Allan Baker; "Ma Rose," by Cassandra Medley; "Wash and Dry," by Shel Silverstein; and "Moonlight Kisses," by Stuart Spencer: Wednesday and Thursday, May 28-29, at 7:30, and Saturday, May 31, at 6 and 10 (previews); Monday, June 2, at 7:30 (opening); and Thursday and Friday, June 5-6, at 7:30. . . . ¶ "Vanishing Act," by Richard Greenberg; "Terry Neal's Future," by Roger Hedden; "The West Side Boys Will Rock You Anytime," by Shirley Kaplan; and "Comic Dialogue," by Alan Zweibel: Friday, May 30, at 7:30; Sunday, June 1, at 3 and 7; Wednesday, June 4, at 7:30; and Saturday, June 7, at 6 and 10. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Closes Monday, June 16.)

Equity Library Theatre—The final production of the season is a revival of the 1964 musical **FUNNY GIRL,** with a score by Jule Styne, lyrics by Bob Merrill, and a book by Isobel Lennart. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, June 8. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Goblin Market—This musical, based on Christina Rossetti's erotic allegorical poem, has a charming score by Polly Pen, imaginative scenery by William Barclay, and good perf mances—singing and acting—by Ter Klausner and Ann Morrison. It may prove little too fanciful for every taste, thoug (4/28/86) (Circle in the Square Downtow 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays throu Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; a Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Golden Land—An extremely sentiment musical about Jewish immigrants to t United States. The company of three m and three women includes an excellent sing named Marc Krause. (12/2/85) (Seco Avenue Theatre, 189 Second Ave., at 12th 674-1460. Wednesdays through Saturdays 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays 2:30, and Sundays at 1 and 5.)

The House of Blue Leaves—A superb revival John Guare's brilliant, ferocious comedy wi Swoosie Kurtz, John Mahoney, and Stocka Channing, among other fine performers. Jer Zaks was the acute, perceptive direct (3/31/86) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Ce ter. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturda at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, a Sundays at 2.)

I'm Not Rappaport—Herb Gardner's syntheti though often entertaining, comedy about t old men who share a bench in Central Park given an expert performance by Cleavon Li tle and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (Booth, 2 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Sa urdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Sa urdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Lie of the Mind—Sam Shepard has devised masterly comedy in this frightening tale

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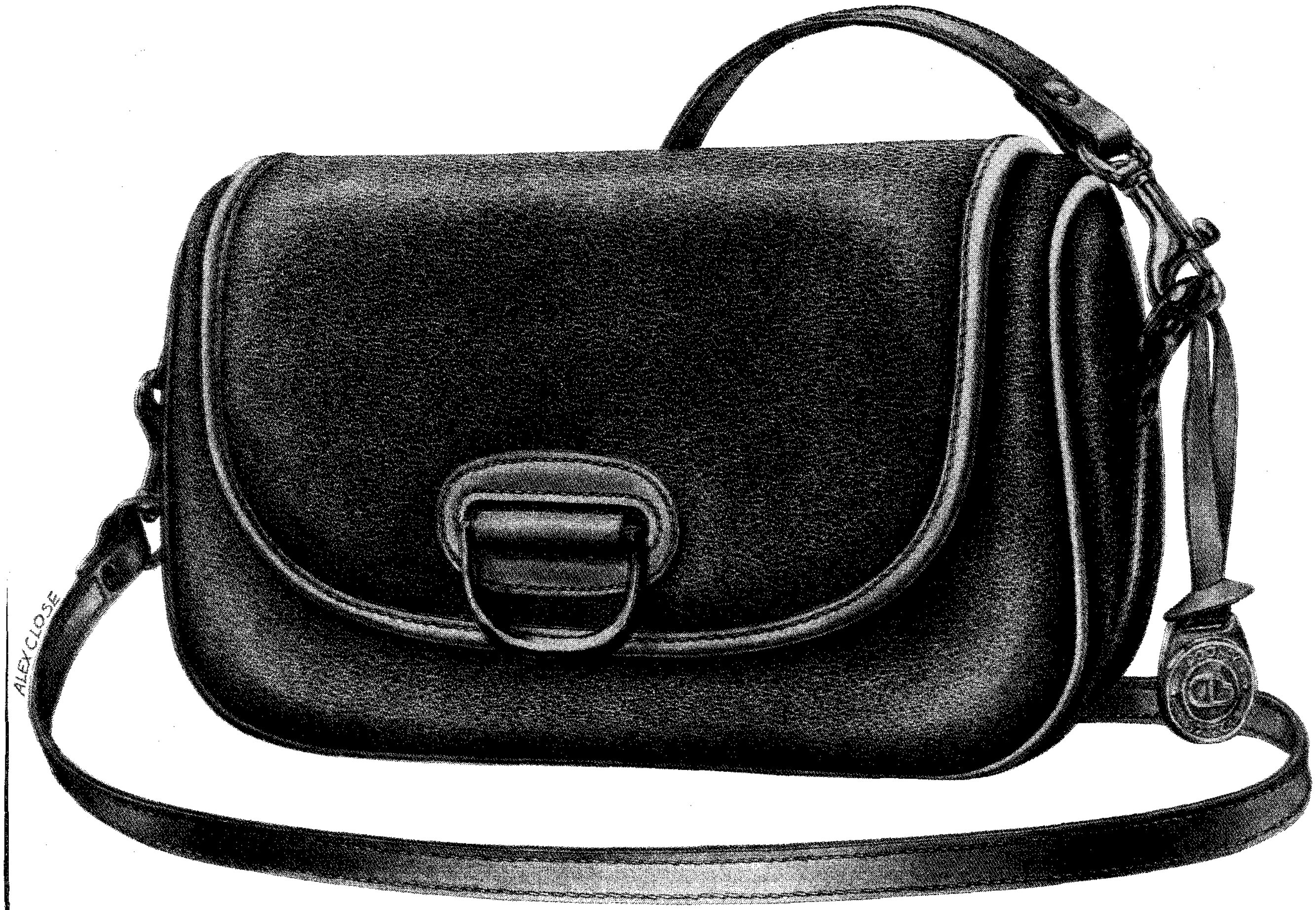

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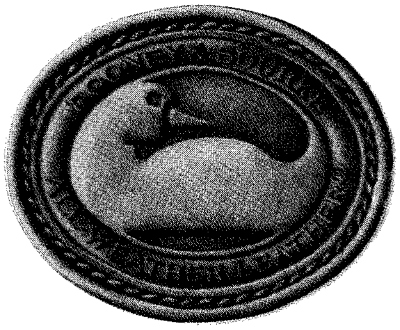

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two Western families bound together by a dreadful marriage. (12/16/85) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly at 8. Matinées Wednesday at 2 and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, June 1.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Victor Herbert's **SWEETHEARTS.** (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

Long Day's Journey Into Night—A superb production of the greatest of American plays, directed by Jonathan Miller and with a cast that includes Jack Lemmon, Bethel Leslie, Peter Gallagher, and Kevin Spacey. (5/12/86) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Loot—Joe Orton's fierce and highly polished farce about all sorts of criminal activity in England in a too mild revival, but with considerable merriment, all the same. With Joseph Maher, Zeljko Ivanek, and Zoë Wanamaker, among other good actors. John Tillinger directed. (3/3/86) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Maggie Magalita—A play by Wendy Kesselman, presented by the Lambs Theatre Company. (Little Theatre at the Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays at 11 A.M.; Wednesdays at 2; Thursdays at 11 and 8; Fridays at 8; and Saturdays at 2 and 8. Closes Saturday, June 14.)

The Man Who Turned Into a Stick—A play by Koho Abe, translated from the Japanese by Donald Keene and starring Ernest Abuba. Presented by the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. (Playhouse 46, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2. Closes Saturday, June 7.)

The Mystery of Edwin Drood—The novel that Dickens left unfinished at the time of his sudden death has been turned into a splendidly nonsensical musical by Rupert Holmes. The big cast is headed by George Rose, and the direction is by Wilford Leach. (12/16/85) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

National Lampoon's Class of '86—A revue created by Matty Simmons and other members of the magazine's editorial staff. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30. Matinées Sundays at 5.)

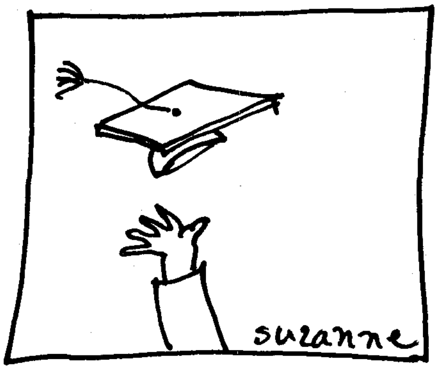
Negro Ensemble Company—Gus Edwards' **LOUIE AND OPHELIA,** about the affair of a middle-aged Bronx couple—a mismatch from the start—is as humorous as it is disturbing. Love conquers all. In the leading roles, Elain Graham and Douglas Turner Ward could not be better. Mr. Ward directed. (5/26/86) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30.)

Nunsense—A musical by Dan Goggin. (Sheridan Square Playhouse, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Olympus on My Mind—A musical with a score by Grant Sturiale and book, lyrics, and direction by Barry Harman. (Actors' Outlet, 120 W. 28th St. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. For tickets, call 645-0783.)

The Perfect Party—A. R. Gurney, Jr.,'s deliberately mannered comedy about a professor who is obsessed with perfection is often disappointing, but just as often Mr. Gurney's wit and high spirits break through the Wildean mold to redeem it. The acting by John Cunningham, Debra Mooney, and Charlotte Moore is very good. John Tillinger directed. (4/14/86) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Personals—A jaunty and romantic little revue about people looking for companionship of one sort or another in the classified ads.



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Talent abounds. Witty book and lyrics and tuneful score; performances by six gifted young actors. (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Petition—Brian Clark has written a two-character play about a well-bred old couple in London, who on the brink of the grave learn a little something about themselves as they quarrel over nuclear weaponry. Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn lend a certain plausibility to a work unworthy of them. (5/5/86) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Place Called Heartbreak—A drama by Robert S. Stokes. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2370. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Professionally Speaking—A cocky little revue that is sometimes entertaining, sometimes not. The subject of the jokes (some good, some not) is the rapacity or ineptitude or hypocrisy of doctors and lawyers and even teachers. Music and lyrics by Peter Winkler, Ernst Muller, and Frederic Block. Tony Tanner was the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 832-2555. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe—A one-person vaudeville show, starring the antic and frantic Lily Tomlin in a series of impersonations—some harsh, some tender—written for her by Jane Wagner. (10/7/85) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7; and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

Social Security—With his first Broadway comedy, Andrew Bergman proves a worthy successor to the Neil Simon of "Barefoot in the Park." The fine cast is composed of Marlo Thomas, Ron Silver, Kenneth Welsh, Olympia Dukakis, Joanna Gleason, and Stefan Schnabel. (4/28/86) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Song & Dance—Imported from England and tricked up for the American trade, this uneasy linking of song (first act) and dance (second act) is redeemed in part by the attractiveness of the chief performers, Bernadette Peters and Christopher d'Amboise. (9/30/85) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

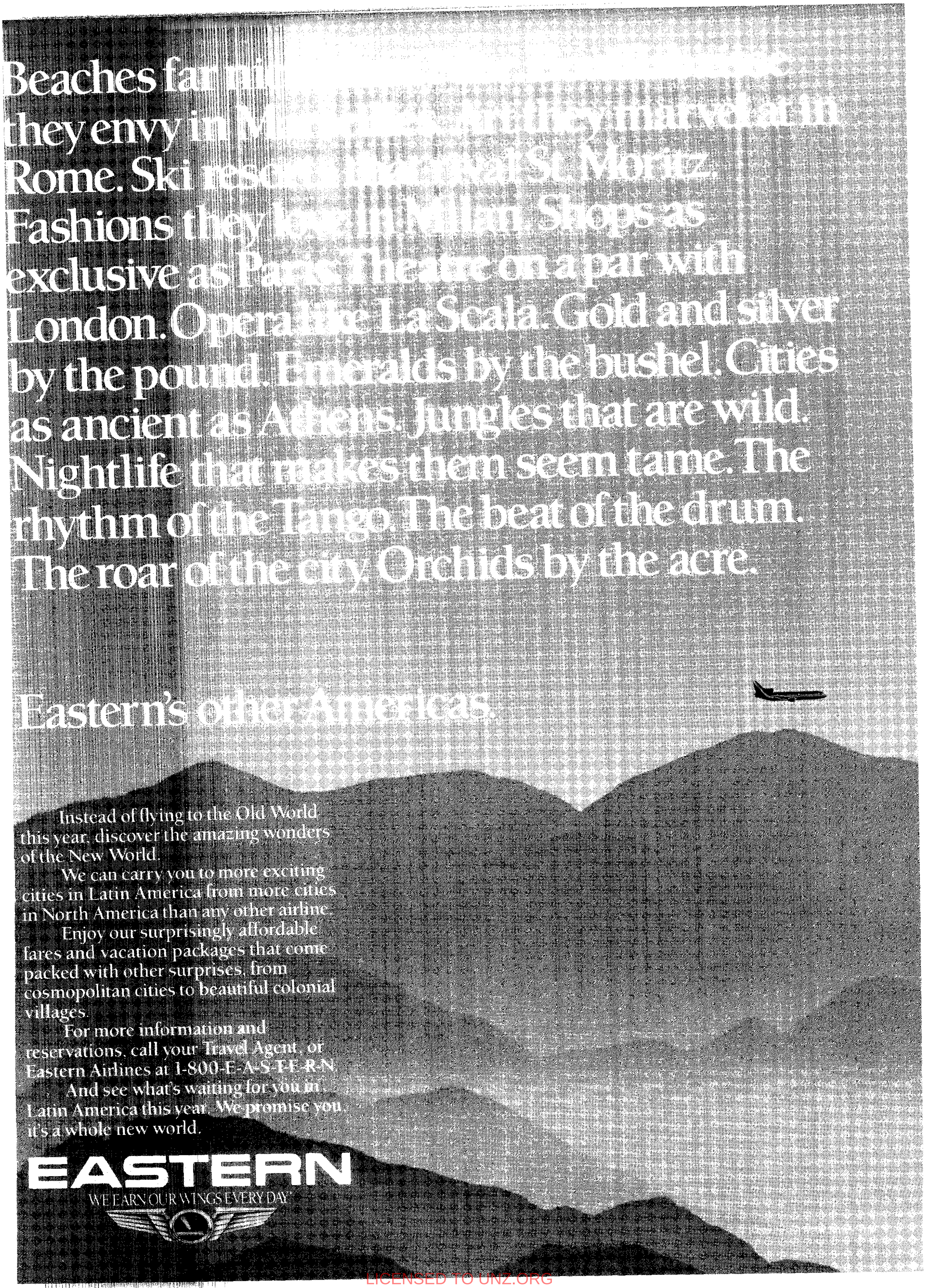
Stories About the Old Days—A play by Bill Harris, with Abbey Lincoln. (Henry Street Settlement Playhouse, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Sweet Charity—A musical that, with very little alteration, has mysteriously improved with age. Directed and choreographed by Bob Fosse, it has a book by Neil Simon, songs by Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields, settings by Robert Randolph, and a star in the person of Debbie Allen. (5/12/86) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Williams and Walker—A musical triumph about the great Bert Williams, who, in 1910, became the first black comedian to star on Broadway, and about his partner, George Walker. Ben Harney and Vondie Curtis-Hall are the marvellous stars. The score is authentic ragtime, by Scott Joplin, Will Marion Cook, Williams himself, and others. Strong, lively direction by Shauneille Perry, choreography by Lenwood Sloan, and musical direction by Neal Tate, who accompanies the show on the piano, with percussionist Joe Marshall at his side. (3/17/86) (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 246-3730. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 5:30. Closes Sunday, June 1.)

Women of Manhattan—A play by John Patrick Shanley. (Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, June 15.)

Long Runs—**BIG RIVER:** William Hauptman and Roger Miller have drawn an agreeably sentimental musical out of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," and Mark Twain in Heaven has reason to be satisfied with the results. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **BILOXI BLUES:** A chapter in the life story of Eugene Morris Jerome, a literary stand-in for the author, Neil Simon. The time is 1943, Eugene is in the Army, and his adventures in Biloxi are truly not to be believed. The director, Gene Saks, has worked hard to squeeze the last drop of humor out of this peculiar fruit. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays and Thursday, May 29, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A musical about a pair of tenderhearted middle-aged lovers presiding over a drag-queen night club in Saint-Tropez; the production is one of the most beautiful—and extravagant—ever to reach Broadway. Jerry Herman wrote the music and lyrics; the book is by Harvey Fierstein. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,856 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, June 8.) . . . **THE FOREIGNER:** A very funny play by the late Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 7 and 10; and Sunday at 7. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, June 1.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Taking off from Roger Corman's 1960 horror



Beaches far ni[illegible] they envy in M[illegible] they marvel at in Rome. Ski resorts that rival St. Moritz. Fashions they love in Milan. Shops as exclusive as Paris. Theatre on a par with London. Opera like La Scala. Gold and silver by the pound. Emeralds by the bushel. Cities as ancient as Athens. Jungles that are wild. Nightlife that makes them seem tame. The rhythm of the Tango. The beat of the drum. The roar of the city. Orchids by the acre.

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EASTERN

WE EARN OUR WINGS EVERY DAY

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **PENN & TELLER:** A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Thursdays and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

THE CIRCUS—Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's hundred-and-sixteenth edition. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Wednesday, May 28, and Friday, May 30, at 1:30 and 7:30; Thursday, May 29, at 10:30 A.M.; Saturday, May 31, at 10:30, 2:30, and 7:30; and final performances Sunday, June 1, at 1 and 5:30.)

SPALDING GRAY—A monologuist presenting two final programs. Through Sunday, June 1: **SEX AND DEATH TO THE AGE 14**. . . . ¶ Tuesday through Sunday, June 3-8: **SWIMMING TO CAMBODIA.** (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

DARIO FO AND FRANCA RAME—Two productions (in Italian) in a two-week engagement. Wednesday, May 28, and Friday, May 30, at 8; Saturday, May 31, at 9; Sunday, June 1, at 7:30; Tuesday, June 3, and Thursday, June 5, at 8; and Saturday, June 7, at 5: **TUTTA CASA, LETTO E CHIESA,** written by Mr. Fo and Miss Rame, and performed by Miss Rame. . . . ¶ Thursday, May 29, at 8; Saturday, May 31, at 5; Sunday, June 1, at 2; Wednesday, June 4, and Friday, June 6, at 8; and Saturday, June 7, at 9: **MISTERO BUFFO,** written, directed, and performed by Mr. Fo. (Joyce, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1986—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Tentative schedule—Wednesday evening, May 28: "Donizetti Variations," "Songs of the Auvergne," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, May 29: "Donizetti Variations," "Firebird," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Friday evening, May 30: "La Valse," "Episodes," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, May 31: "Scotch Symphony," "Divertimento No. 15," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, May 31: "La Valse," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Who Cares?" . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, June 1: "Songs of the Auvergne," "Episodes," and "Gershwin Concerto." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, June 1: "Divertimento No. 15," "La Valse," and "Who Cares?" . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, June 3: "Mozartiana," "Episodes," and "Scotch Symphony." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, June 4: "Dances at a Gathering" and "New Ballet No. 2" (preview). . . . ¶ Thursday evening, June 5: "Symphony in C," "New Ballet No. 2" (première), and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Friday evening, June 6: "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "Songs of the Auvergne," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, June 7: "Mozartiana," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, June 7: "Donizetti Variations," "Firebird," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 1. Through Sunday, June 22.)

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AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE—Wednesday matinée and evening, May 28; Thursday evening, May 29; and Monday and Tuesday evenings, June 2-3: "Don Quixote (Kitri's Wedding)." . . . ¶ Friday evening, May 30; Saturday matinée and evening, May 31; Wednesday matinée and evening, June 4; and Saturday matinée and evening, June 7: "The Nutcracker." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, June 5: "The Leaves Are Fading," "Murder," and "Francesca da Rimini." . . . ¶ Friday evening, June 6: "Theme and Variations," "Sphinx," and "Requiem." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2. Through Saturday, July 5.)

MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY—Wednesday evening, May 28: "Seraphic Dialogue," "Part Real—Part Dream," and "The Rite of Spring." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, May 29: "Song," "Heretic," "Diversion of Angels," and "Acts of Light." . . . ¶ Friday evening, May 30: "Diversion of Angels," five solo works, "Temptations of the Moon," and "Appalachian Spring." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, May 31: "Song," "Temptations of the Moon," and "Appalachian Spring." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, May 31: "Seraphic Dialogue," "Heretic," "Diversion of Angels," and "The Rite of Spring." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, June 1: "Appalachian Spring," "Plain of Prayer," and "Acts of Light." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, June 3: "Seraphic Dialogue," "El Penitente," "Diversion of Angels," and "Part Real—Part Dream." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, June 4: "Acts of Light," "Tangled Night" (première), and "The Rite of Spring." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, June 5: "Cave of the Heart," "Temptations of the Moon," and "Every Soul Is a Circus." . . . ¶ Friday evening, June 6: "Song," "Heretic," "Plain of Prayer," and "Tangled Night." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, June 7: "Plain of Prayer," "Cave of the Heart," and "Part Real—Part Dream." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, June 7: "Diversion of Angels," five solo works, "Tangled Night," and "The Rite of Spring." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Evenings at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, June 15.)

CHEN & DANCERS—A program of contemporary dance. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. Wednesday, May 28, and Friday, May 30, at 8, and Sunday, June 1, at 2.)

MAFATA DANCE COMPANY—Programs of modern dance. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Thursday, May 29, at 7:30 [a benefit performance, with guest artists Mercedes Ellington and Obba Babatunde; for information about tickets, call 247-7575], and Friday and Saturday, May 30-31, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated live that are subject to last-minute change; it i therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Gallery
GALLERY

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JULIE WILSON,** a wonderful, engaging singer, i currently in residence in the Oak Room Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St (242-9066)—A long, narrow, nautical ba restaurant, and jazz haunt. On Friday an Saturday, May 30-31, Lodi Carr will sin with accompaniment from pianist **LARR VUKOVICH,** and on Friday and Saturday, Jun 6-7, pianist **DON FRIEDMAN,** bassist **HARVI SWARTZ,** and guitarist **ATTILA ZOLLER** will all b present. Other groups can be heard durin the rest of the week. Sets begin Sunday through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays an Saturdays at ten.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSO DEARIE** *is ensconced in this club to sing in he* small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesdays through Saturdays from six-thirty t eight-thirty.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475 8592)—**STÉPHANE GRAPPELLI,** the altogethe charming swing-jazz violinist, is here with hi trio through Sunday, June 1; Monday, Jun 2, will belong to the **KENNY GARRETT ALL-STARS** which will feature **WOODY SHAW, MULGRE MILLER,** and **CHARNETT MOFFETT;** and on Tuesday June 3, three more jazz violinists—update and electrified ones, at that—**MICHAL URBANIAK JOHN BLAKE,** and **DIDIER LOCKWOOD,** will move in Shows at nine and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228 6300)—The oh-so-varied roster: Friday, Ma 30, Canadian singer and songwriter **JAN SIBERRY;** Saturday and Sunday, May 31-Jun 1, actor, singer, and songwriter **KRI KRISTOFFERSON** and Nashville singer and songwriter **BILLY SWAN;** Tuesday and Wednesday June 3-4, Southern California singer an songwriter **WARREN ZEVON;** and Friday and Saturday, June 6-7, **BUSTER POINDEXTER** (forme New York Dolls singer and songwriter Davi Johansen) **& THE BANSHEES OF BLUE.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great, up-close view from a bar *stool (unless there are a lot of standees, which* is usually the case) of first-rate pianists or guitarists and bassists. **ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS** is at the piano through Saturday, May 31; **HUGH LAWSON** and **BOB CRANSHAW** provide piano-bass duets on Sunday, June 1; and on Monday, June 2, **JOANNE BRACKEEN** will be the pianist. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Long communal tables swathed in pink cloths and a bandstand panelled in oak. Harmonica expert, guitarist, whistler, and singer **TOOTS THIELEMANS** performs with a quartet through Sunday, June 1, and on Tuesday, June 3, in comes **ERNESTINE ANDERSON,** a veteran singer who started out in the forties (when she was a teen-ager) with the big bands of Russell Jacquet (Illinois' brother) and Johnny Otis, and in the fifties joined the Lionel Hampton band. Shows at nine and eleven, with an extra show at twelve-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. No music Mondays. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**BOBBY SHORT,** the vigorous interpreter of show, movie, and pre-punk popular music, is back in the Café Carlyle, along with his trusty sidekicks, **BEVERLY PEER** and **ROBBIE SCOTT.** Their hours are Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . **BARBARA CARROLL** is in the Bemelmans Bar at the piano, soloing and singing from ten Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll as a garage industry. Monday is showcase night. Music from long after nine-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A snazzy downstairs jazz club. Trumpeter **RANDY BRECKER** and pianist **ELIANE ELIAS** co-pilot a quintet that features **MICHAEL BRECKER** on tenor sax through Sunday, June 1,

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MINOLTA

and on Tuesday, June 3, trumpeter **FREDDIE HUBBARD** will be in town with his quintet. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Sets begin Mondays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays through Sundays at eight. Dining.

FREDDY'S, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—Singer **MICHELE BAUTIER** is here with pianist **MIKE ABENE**, bassist **JAY LEONHART**, *and guitarist* **JOHN BASILE** Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Wednesdays through Saturdays belong to Alicia Sherman; Sundays and Mondays, Joe Derise sings and plays piano; and Tuesdays are reserved for guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE'S** trio. All these groups begin about ten.

HANRATTY'S, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—*The dining-room grand is in the* hands of **DICK WELLSTOOD**, whose stream of piano consciousness flows in a nifty stride style Tuesdays through Saturdays. Sundays are claimed by Amy Duncan, and Mondays by **DICK HYMAN**. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER SALOON, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **DON FRIEDMAN** and **MICHAEL FORMANEK** are the pianist and bassist until Saturday, May 31, and on Tuesday, June 3, pianist **LOU LEVY** will come in with bassist **MICHAEL MOORE**. Music from nine-thirty.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—A spirited, noisy, crowded hangout for expatriate Texans and French tourists, where they celebrate Texas Independence Day but not Bastille Day. Wednesday and Thursday, May 28-29, bassist and singer **RICK DANKO**, drummer and singer **LEVON HELM**, and keyboardist **GARTH HUDSON**, all former members of The Band, and Chris Daniels & the Kings; Friday and Saturday, May 30-31, New Riders of the Purple Sage; Sunday, June 1, **BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE**, the folkie with the vibrato; Thursday, June 5, New Orleans pianist **DR. JOHN**; Friday, June 6, La Bamba & the Hubcaps; and Saturday, June 7, Chicago-blues singer and blues-harp master **JAMES COTTON**. Music after nine nightly. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**DOROTHY DONEGAN**, who is apt to bounce around the piano bench and ripple the keys wondrously, works with her trio at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is likely to show up to play celebrity clarinet with a New Orleans-style sextet. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A worthy jazz and rhythm-and-blues haunt. Wednesday, May 28, Brian Lynch's quintet; Thursday, May 29, Roland Vazquez; Friday and Saturday, May 30-31, rhapsodic jazz violinist **NOEL POINTER**; and Friday and Saturday, June 6-7, **ART BLAKEY & THE JAZZ MESSENGERS**. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—A big, fancy (but the appropriate dress is black sneakers rather than black tie) thirties ballroom, complete with eighties video, that presents past, present, future, past-perfect, present-perfect, future-perfect, and imperfect forms of rock and roll. Friday, May 30, Frank Marino & Mahogany Rush and Montrose; Saturday, May 31, Urban Blight; Friday, June 6, Mink DeVille and **JOE ELY**; and Saturday, June 7, GBH, Agnostic Front, and Leeway. Shows begin at nine Mondays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dancing.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Brazilian music, African music, salsa music, reggae music, and American music. The lineup: Wednesday and Thursday, May 28-29, **BETTY CARTER**, an exciting improviser of a singer; Friday and Saturday, May 30-31, Java; Tuesday, June 3, the **SKATALITES**, who perform ska, the precursor of reggae; Wednesday and Thursday, June 4-5, trumpeter **HUGH MASEKELA & KALAHARI**; Friday, June 6, **MIKATA**; and Saturday, June 7, Tabou Combo. Music from ten. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Any new band called the **LEADERS** that has **ARTHUR BLYTHE**, **CHICO FREEMAN**, **LESTER BOWIE**, **CECIL MC BEE**, **KIRK LIGHTSEY**, and **DON MOYE** in its ranks will certainly have followers; they'll be playing here until Sunday, June 1. On Tuesday, June 3, **JAMES MOODY**, one of the high priests of bebop and jazz-musician humor, will take over. Mondays are turned over to pianist, composer, and sage **GIL EVANS** and his enthusiastic **ORCHESTRA**. Shows from about ten. Dining.

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TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A refreshingly simple and basic (in the age of extravagance), non-trendy blues and rock club. The music: rock and roller **ELLIOTT MURPHY** Thursday, May 29; **LIL QUEENIE**, from New Orleans, Friday and Saturday, May 30-31; Monday, June 2, the Urbations; and on Tuesdays Kristi Rose, a throaty Kentuckian rockabillyette. Shows after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Salsa in the downstairs room, after nine on Mondays: on June 2, **EDDIE PALMIERI**, **CONJUNTO CLASSICO**, and saxophonist **RONNIE CUBER**, the guest jazz soloist, will all be present. . . . ¶ On the Terrace, **BOB DOROUGH** sings and plays piano to the bass accompaniment of **BILL TAKAS** through Sunday, June 1, and on Tuesday, June 3, pianist **LARRY WILLIS** will come in. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** is also present, with a trio, on Tuesdays. Music from nine-thirty.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This hallowed basement establishment is the most famous jazz club in *the world.* **MILT JACKSON** *plays fulfilling blues* on his beautiful Radio City Music Hall of a vibraharp with his quartet through Sunday, June 1, and on Tuesday, June 3, another vibraharpist, **BOBBY HUTCHERSON** to be exact, will descend the stairs with *his* quartet. Mondays remain prime time for the **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA**. Music from nine-thirty.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—A Columbia-student and uptown-jazz hangout. **LITTLE JIMMY SCOTT** sings here through Sunday, June 1, and on Wednesday, June 4, **DAKOTA STATON** will begin singing blues and ballads. Mondays and Tuesdays are comedy nights. Shows from about nine.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A ground-floor town-house restaurant, bar, and jazz nook. The pianists and bassists: **LARRY WILLIS** and **WALTER BOOKER** through Saturday, May 31, and **CAROL BRITTO** and **MAJOR HOLLEY** starting Monday, June 2. **GENE BERTONCINI** and his longtime colleague **MICHAEL MOORE** see to the guitar-bass responsibilities on Sundays. Musi weeknights from eight and Sundays fron seven.

TO BEACH
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JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

SIMPLE MINDS—With The Call. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600 Wednesday, May 28, at 8.)

NORMAN SIMMONS TRIO—Jazz Cultural Theatre Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 502-4300. Friday, May 30, at 10 and midnight.

CHARLES DAVIS and **THE JACK WILSON QUARTE** —Jazz Cultural Theatre. Saturday, May 31 at 10, 11:30, and 1.

CHARLI PERSIP QUINTET—Jazz Center of Nev York, 380 Lafayette St. 505-5660. Saturday May 31, at 9:30 and 11.

JACKSON BROWNE—Radio City Music Hall. Saturday and Sunday, May 31-June 1, at 8.

STANDING ARROW SINGERS AND DANCERS—Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. Saturday May 31, at 8. For information about tickets call 362-3366.

LYRICS AND LYRICISTS—The final program in a series entitled "Broadway Songs of the Forties," this one featuring Sheldon Harnick as narrator. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd St Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410 Sunday, June 1, at 2:30 and 8; Monday, June 2, at 8; and Wednesday, June 4, at 8.)

BODEANS—Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 477-3728. Friday, June 6, at 10.

GEORGE WINSTON—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 787-1477. Friday and Saturday, June 6-7, at 8.

DEPECHE MODE—Radio City Music Hall. Saturday and Sunday, June 7-8, at 8.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

JOHN FERREN (1905-70)—Colorful abstract geometric paintings dating from 1965 to 1969. Through Saturday, May 31. (Perlow, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

KEN FRIEDMAN—Ancient Scandinavian texts are the basis for paintings on canvas and paper by a member of the Fluxus group. Through June 28. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

HOWARD HODGKIN—Abstract oil paintings on wood panels. Through Thursday, June 5. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.) . . . ¶ Jacobson, 50 W. 57th St., is showing prints from the past twenty years.

FERNAND LÉGER (1881-1955) **AND PICASSO** (1881-1973)—Oils, mostly, hung informally. Through June 13. (Perls, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Closed Saturdays.)

KASIMIR MALEVICH (1878-1935) **AND LIUBOV S. POPOVA** (1889-1924)—Works on paper by two leaders of the Russian avant-garde early in this century. Through Friday, May 30. (Hutton, 33 E. 74th St.)

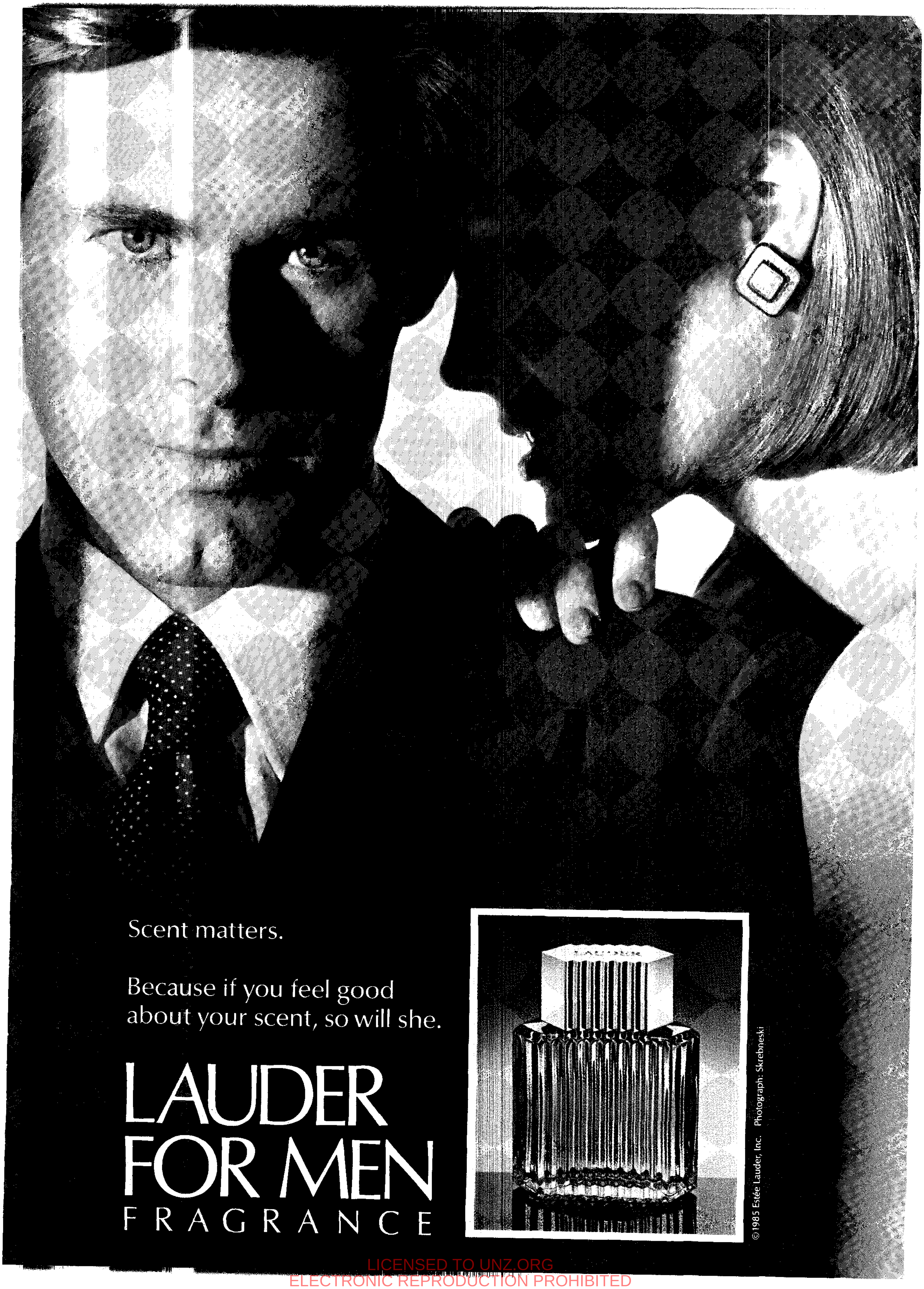
MATTA—Large pastel drawings inspired by Don Quixote. Through June 30. (Spanish Institute, 684 Park Ave., at 68th St. Open Mondays.)

ODD NERDRUM—Narrative paintings by a Norwegian artist who portrays people at the top of the world peering fearfully toward troubling developments in the lower latitudes. Also, bravura portraits and still-lifes. A two-gallery show. (Hamilton, 19 E. 71st St., through Friday, June 6; closed Saturday, May 31. . . . ¶ Germans Van Eck, 420 West Broadway; through Saturday, June 7.)

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE (1887-1986)—Paintings, pastels, drawings, and prints—more than forty works in all. Through Saturday, June 7. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

JOHN SINGER SARGENT (1856-1925)—A benefit show of Impressionist paintings done in England and France in the eighteen-eighties. Through June 14. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

TONY SMITH (1912-80)—Abstract paintings from the fifties and sixties; also, bronzes cast in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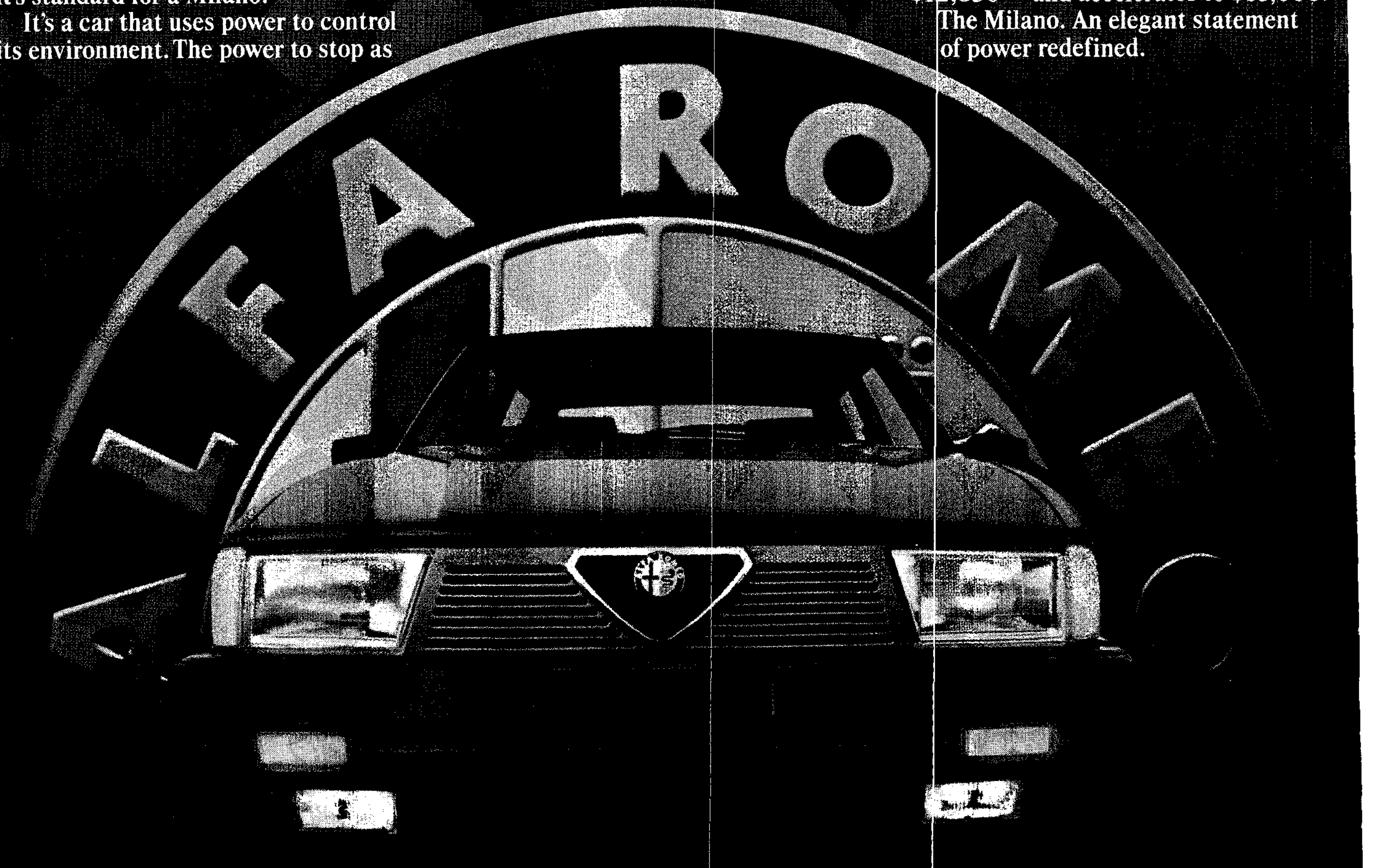

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

smaller sizes than the larger-scale originals. Through June 21. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Graham Snow—Wall constructions by a British artist who has a penchant for the obelisks and architectural follies of his homeland. Through July 31. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

Michael Tetherow—Abstract paintings and related drawings. Through June 14. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

Selina Trieff / George Herriman (1878-1944)—Figure paintings and drawings. Through Friday, May 30. / Pen-and-ink drawings, most of them from 1919 to 1929, and several watercolors of the comic-strip character Krazy Kat. Through Thursday, June 5. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Mary Ann Unger—A walk-through aluminum architectural work that will go to a Philadelphia park this summer. Also, three life-size figures. *Through Saturday, May 31. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)*

Willard Gallery Anniversary—The gallery has mounted the works of artists it has sponsored since 1974, Lois Lane, Donald Sultan, Susan Rothenberg among them, in the second of two fiftieth-anniversary exhibits in memory of its founder, Marian Willard Johnson. Through June 27. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Group Shows—At the **rachel adler,** 58 E. 79th St.: Paintings and drawings from the twenties by such European artists as Grosz, Ozenfant, and Arp. Through Saturday, June 7. . . . **center for african art,** 54 E. 68th St.: "African Aesthetics: The Carlo Monzino Collection," comprising works in wood, mainly, but also in gold, ivory, bronze, stone, and terra-cotta, and including the famous "Black Venus." Through Sept. 7. (Open Sundays, noon to 5.) . . . **hirschl & adler modern,** 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.: Four paintings by Joe Zucker from the early seventies (his cotton-ball period), a sculpture from the mid-seventies by Christopher Wilmarth, and three paintings from the sixties by Cy Twombly. Through June 27. . . . **wildenstein,** 19 E. 64th St.: A benefit show of about a hundred paintings and works on paper from the Princeton University Art Museum. These works—by Europeans and Americans—include a Degas "Dancers," Ammi Phillips's "The Girl in Pink," and Willem de Kooning's "Black Friday." Through June 27. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Jean-Pierre Bertrand / Yasuo Kuniyoshi (1889-1953)—An installation of steel-framed works containing sheets of paper that have been rubbed with lemon, honey, salt, or natural pigment. Through June 27. / Drawings from the twenties. Through June 19. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ Paintings and drawings by Kuniyoshi are also at the Whitney Museum branch at Park Ave. at 42nd Street.

Norman Bluhm—A two-gallery show of voluptuous abstract paintings. Through June 14. (Washburn, 42 E. 57th St., and 113 Greene St.)

Louise Bourgeois—New abstract sculptures. Through Saturday, June 7. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Frank Bowling—Recent impastoed abstractions. Through Saturday, May 31. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Scott Burton—New furniture pieces carved from granite and wood. Through Saturday, May 31. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Alan Davie / Jonathan Talbot—Paintings and drawings entitled "Meditations and Hallucinations." Through Saturday, May 31. / Paper collages on a greeting-card scale. Through June 14. (Gimpel, in a new location at 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Richard Deacon—Sculptures in a variety of mediums, dominated by a sort of three-dimensional pretzel made of one continuous strip of laminated wood that would be a hundred and forty feet long if stretched out. Through Saturday, May 31. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St.)

Lisa Dinhofer—Still-life scenes: bottles, marbles, plates, glasses, doilies, mats, etc. Through June 21. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Gonzalo Fonseca—Sculptures carved from stone blocks which suggest archeological digs.

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Through Saturday, May 31. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St.)

Kathryn Freeman—Paintings of street scenes in Warsaw by the American wife of a press correspondent assigned there. Through Saturday, May 31. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Lee Hall—Abstracts based on landscapes and done in tempera. Through Wednesday, June 4. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

Robert Hudson—Sculptures made up of flea-market oddments (old carpetbeaters, for instance) and then cast in polychrome bronze. Through Friday, June 6. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

Bryan Hunt / Ellsworth Kelly—Small-scale bronzes and drawings. Through Saturday, May 31. / Monochromatic paintings on shaped canvases. Through Saturday, June 7. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Six sculptures by Mr. Kelly are on view at the Blum Helman Warehouse, 80 Greene St.

Yves Klein (1928-62)—Monochromatic paintings, sponge reliefs and sculptures, and paintings with body imprints. Through Saturday, May 31. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St.)

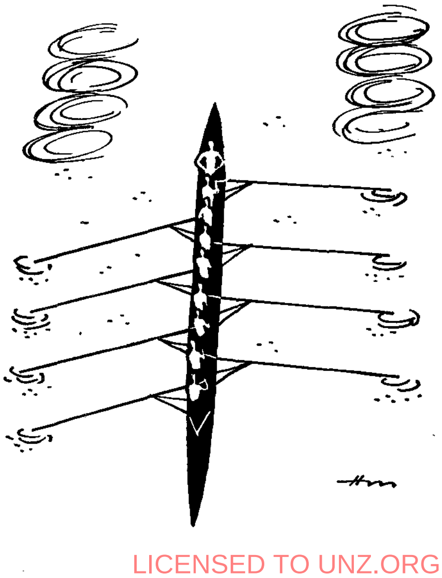
Henry Moore—Sculptures, drawings, and prints. Through June 14. (Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St.) . . . ¶ A single large bronze sculpture. Through Aug. 29. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

William Palmer—Paintings from the early years of the artist's career, including a four-panel screen of Washington Square Park (1929). Through Saturday, June 7. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Beverly Pepper / Burgoyne Diller (1906-65)—Large totemlike sculptures in stone, painted steel, and stainless steel. Through Friday, May 30. / Geometric pencil-and-crayon drawings. Through Friday, June 6. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Judy Pfaff—The Solomon gallery's confines are barely able to contain the exuberant wall constructions this artist has concocted of wire, wood, metal, plastic, greenery, stainless-steel bowls, branches, and vivid paint. The over-all title is "Apples & Oranges," but she has sneaked in a couple of pears, too. Through Saturday, June 7. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Picasso (1881-1973)—Two exhibitions. Olympian doodles extracted from forty-five sketchbooks detailing the artist's day-to-day work. (He kept a hundred and seventy-five sketchbooks during his life.) Through Aug. 15. (*Pace, 32 E. 57th St.*) . . . ¶ A loan show of fifty drawings that are being shown in public for the first time. Through June 28. (Mazoh, 13 E. 76th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.) . . . ¶ P.S.: Picasso is also represented at Perls (see above, under "Uptown") and at Pace-MacGill (see below, under "Photography").



Richard Pousette-Dart—Recent paintings, including reliefs. Through Saturday, May 31. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Rebecca Purdum—Large, richly colored glazed-looking oil abstractions the artist paints with her hands and rubs and rubs and rubs. First solo show in New York. Through Saturday, May 31. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

Leo Rabkin—Handmade paper works that have been embossed with rows of small squares and colored with pastels. Through Saturday, June 7. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

Maria Scotti / Susanne Doremus—Paintings of classical nude figures and horsemen juxtaposed with transcriptions of childish drawings of Teddy bears and dinosaurs by the artist's niece. / Small figures drawn in white on a canvas of variegated colors which also serves as a ground for the artist's private pictographs. Through Saturday, May 31. (Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

Bonnie Sklarski—Idyllic landscapes. Through June 18. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Antoni Tàpies—New abstract paintings. Through Friday, June 6. (Galerie Maeght Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Edward Allington—Segments of monuments set up in unorthodox arrangements, accompanied by a squad of plaster Venuses in one instance and a company of plaster sphinxes in another. Also, drawings. Through Saturday, May 31. (Brown, 100 Greene St.)

Richard Beckett—Abstract constructions and large works on paper by a recent Guggenheim winner. Through Saturday, May 31. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Seymour Boardman and Richards Ruben—Abstract Expressionist paintings by each. Through June 14. (Shapolsky, 99 Spring St. Opens at noon.)

Phyllis Bramson / Bruce Wall—Fantasy paintings that include romantic Chagall-like couples floating in the air. / Paintings in which a three-dimensional hobgoblin who bulges out of the picture plane seems to be devouring the cityscape he is painted on. Through Friday, May 30. (Knowlton, 153 Mercer St.)

Stephen Buckley / Peter Nadin—Abstract constructed paintings on wood and on canvas. / Paintings. Through Wednesday, June 4. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Victor Burgin / Beryl Korot—A series of photographic works based on Edward Hopper's painting "Office at Night." / Canvases filled with scriptlike markings of a language invented by the artist. Through Saturday, May 31. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Rich Colicchio—Oil paintings of the artist's heavy-lidded face seen in various situations—as the body of a bird, for instance, or as a bug, or starred and spangled like a flag. Through Saturday, June 7. (Bryers, 111 Greene St.)

Rupert Deese—Large, scholarly paintings, one dwelling on the beauty of a ship's propeller. Through June 18. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Elaine de Kooning—Large and small canvases that were inspired by, and seem very similar to, the cave paintings in Spain and southern France. Through Saturday, May 31. (Gruenebaum, 415 West Broadway.)

Elizabeth Dworkin—Abstract paintings. Through Saturday, May 31. (Munroe, 415 West Broadway.)

George D. Green—Layered constructions, à la Stella, in which the sense of depth is sharpened by the artist's skill in painting trompe-l'oeil perspective. There are also large-scale related drawings. Through Saturday, May 31. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Anish Kapoor / Arnulf Rainer—Large, bright-colored, blossomlike wall sculptures and several freestanding pieces, all coated with raw pigment patted on by hand. / Painted-over pages from a book of death masks, including those of Coleridge, Abraham Lincoln, and Benjamin Franklin. Through Saturday, May 31. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Joseph Kosuth—An installation of numerous

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billboard-size photographic blowups of a paragraph from Freud. Through June 14. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

Nancy Langer / Phyllis Gaughran—Abstract paintings. / Abstract paintings and collages. Through Sunday, June 1. (Pindar, 127 Greene St. Opens Sundays at 1.)

Christopher Le Brun—Large paintings involving romantic classical figures—Pegasus, for instance. The artist is British. Through Saturday, May 31. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Robert Longo—Large-scale sculptures using mixed mediums, including iron castings and canvas paintings. Through Wednesday, June 4. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Tadeusz Myslowski—Grids of white-enamelled steel plates decorated with irregular black crosses—the artist's hallmark. Through Saturday, June 7. (Carpenter+Hochman, 420 West Broadway.)

Martin Ramirez (1885-1960)—Sixty-one drawings by a naïf artist. Through June 28. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Ricardo Regazzoni—Numerous freestanding columns made of paperboard and covered in gold leaf, pencil drawings of the columns, and folding screens painted with columns. Through Saturday, May 31. (Green, 152 Wooster St.)

Joyce Robins—New abstract bronze and ceramic sculptures. Through Saturday, May 31. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Ce Roser—Abstractions in oils. Through June 21. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Kenny Scharf—Paintings and polyurethane sculptures of monstrous toys, with multiple eyes, protruding tongues, and permanent grins, decked out in radiant colors. How now Hieronymus! Through Saturday, May 31. (Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St.)

Hunt Slonem / Philip Ayers—Colorful paintings of tropical birds, goldfish, monkeys, etc. / Urban realist paintings. Through Saturday, June 7. (Semaphore, 462 West Broadway.)

Gary Stephan—Abstract acrylics from this year, plus abstract oils on Masonite done twenty years ago. Through Saturday, May 31. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Robert Therrien—Paintings and sculptures that have a kind of stripped-down simplicity and, the artist says, a close kinship to the first snowman he made as a child. Through June 14. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Anton van Dalen—Stark, stylized paintings and drawings of street scenes of the lower East Side during the seventies and of the pigeons the artist raises on rooftops there now. Through June 14. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Group Shows—At **the drawing center**, 137 Greene St.: A show entitled "The Northern Landscape: Flemish, Dutch, and British Drawings from the Courtauld Collections" contains some of the major exponents of the landscape genre between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth, among them Bruegel (Pieter, the Elder), Collaert, Constable, and Turner. Through July 26. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **sander**, 51 Greene St.: A whiff of Germany between the wars—paintings and drawings by Brockmann, Hoerle, Beckmann, Dix, and others, and photographs of artists by August Sander. Through Saturday, June 7.

OTHER GALLERIES

Francesco Bonami—Paintings in which the artist works over scenes from his childhood. First one-man show in New York. Through Sunday, June 1. (Sharpe, 175 Avenue B, at 11th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at 1.)

Christian Eckart—Decorative panels, some with gold leaf, some with Plexiglas, plus eighty plates dealing with the restoration of the Santa Croce Crucifix in Florence. Through Sunday, June 1. (Audiello, 436 E. 11th St., near Avenue A. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Antony Gormley—Life-size lead figures, plus other sculptures of lead and terra-cotta. Through June 10. (Ala, 32 W. 20th St.)

Marshal Hopkins—Small paintings by an artist with a quirky view of the world around him. Through Sunday, June 1. (Cerigo, 202 Avenue A, near 12th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Richard Kalina—Abstract compositions in black, white, and shades of gray, made up mostly of art-history references, successfully synthesized. Through Sunday, June 1. (Piezo Electric, 200 Avenue A, near 12th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Michael Kessler—Abstract paintings on wood in which the oils have been partially scraped away. Through June 8. (Wolff, 513 E. 6th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Christof Kohlhofer and Marilyn Minter—Large-scale paintings. Through June 15. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Pascal Lamorinière—Forthright portraits, mostly in oil, of some of New York's Finest, a Texas Ranger, and some Austin cops. Through Sunday, June 1. (Bond, 30 Bond St. Opens at 12:30 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Walter Martin—Nine installations by a sculptor who makes practically all the components. They range from a headless dog addressing, via a transmitter, a large pile of bones to a takeoff of Fragonard consisting of a swing in a doorframe surrounded by a couple of bushels of pears. Through Sunday, June 1. (P.P.O.W, 337 E. 8th St., near Avenue C. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Allan McCollum—Vase forms over a foot high, cast in solid Hydrocal, painted in various solid colors, and arranged in groups of five, by an artist who guarantees that they have no utilitarian value. He is the man who invented "surrogate pictures." Through June 8. (Cash-Newhouse, 170 Avenue B, near 11th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Edgar Negret—Impressive but relatively small-scale sculptures by this Colombian artist who works exclusively in aluminum and paints it black, white, red, or yellow. Through June 28. (Humphrey, a new gallery, at 242 E. 5th St. Opens at noon.)

Carl Palazzolo—Abstract triptych paintings. Through Saturday, June 7. (Stoler, 13 White St.)

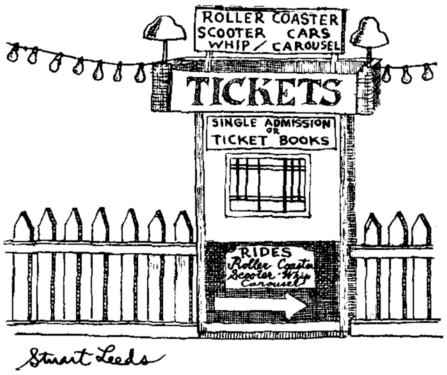
Rick Prol—New paintings of decaying urban scenes. Through Sunday, June 1. (B-Side, 543 E. 6th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Robert Rauschenberg—Paintings and collages dated 1949 to 1952. Through Saturday, May 31. (Gagosian, 521 W. 23rd St., near 11th Ave.)

Mark Schwartz / Claire Lieberman—Figurative paintings. / Abstract sculptures done in colored stone and slate; also, monoprints. Through Saturday, May 31. (Baum, 109 Hudson St.)

Russell Sharon—Minnesota landscapes in many of which collaged pieces of red-painted wood represent tree trunks. Through Sunday, June 1. (Bromm, 170 Avenue A, at 11th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Yolanda Shashaty—Landscapes and seascapes. Through June 15. (Sragow, 436 E. 11th St near Avenue A. Opens at 1 Wednesday through Sundays.)



Michele Zalopany—Outsize black-and-whit charcoal drawings of people and places Through Saturday, June 7. (Good, 39 Grea Jones St.)

Group Show—"Images of the Unknown," a exhibit of artists who avow a spiritual motivation for their work—for example, thre visionary paintings by Joseph Parker, a recluse who lives in the desert, and a room-siz piece by Ann McCoy in which the walls, ceiling, everything is painted a very dark blue to make a sanctuary for her paintings an bronze preternatural figures. Through Jun 15. (P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Bill Brandt (1904-83) / **Picasso** (1881-1973)—Vintage photographs of nudes. / Manipulated and cutout prints resembling his Cubis paintings. Also, portraits of the artist taken by his contemporaries—Man Ray, Irvin Penn, Robert Capa. Through Aug. 1. (Pace MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Burden Gallery, 20 E. 23rd St., has approximately a hundred vintage photographs by Mr. Brandt Through Saturday, June 7. (Opens at 1.)

Horst / Marina Schinz—Photographs of flower by each, in garden settings by Miss Schinz Through Aug. 1. (Staley-Wise, 177 Prince St Opens at noon.)

Jean Pigozzi—Photographs of events in the artist's everyday life. Through June 14. (Wolf 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Eliot Porter / Charles Heaney (1897-1981)—Black-and-white photographs of the Southwest, dating from 1939 to 1965. / Painting and prints. Through Saturday, May 31. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon or Saturdays.)

John Thomson (1837-1921)—Albumin print and carbon prints of the Orient by a Scottish photographer. Through Aug. 3. (Asia Society 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. Opens at noon or Sundays.)

Group Shows—At the **facchetti**, 211 E. 3rd St. Photographs concerned with television—either taken directly from the TV screen or o TV sets in various living rooms. Louise Lawler, Frank Majore, Bruce Davidson, and Anne Turyn are among those represented Through Sunday, June 1. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 11 to 6; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.) . . . **international center of photography**, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. More than a hundred prints of Africa by European photographers, dating from the mid-nineteenth century through the First World War. Through June 22. (Tuesdays noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5 Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.) . . . **pfeifer**, 568 Broadway: Photographs used as part of three-dimensional objects—especially freestanding screens—by nine contemporary artists among them Russell Drisch, Gerald Incandela, and Grace Knowlton. Through June 27.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A chronological arrangement of the school of Nuremberg's Gothic and Renaissance works of art, including oversize carved-oak statues of Christ and the Virgin by Veit Stoss, Dürer's sketch for a chandelier in the shape of a dragon and the finished chandelier itself, and brass sculptures by Peter Vischer the Elder. Through June 22. . . . ¶ Japanese color woodblocks from a period that could be called post-Commodore Perry, in that the prints reflect the impression Westerners made on late-nineteenth-century Japanese artists. Lincoln Kirstein gave these prints to the museum. . . . ¶ A show of seventy works by Rodin. Through June 15. . . . ¶ "Costumes of Royal India," an extravaganza of garments and accessories evoking palaces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Through Aug. 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A comprehensive selection of prints by Jasper Johns. Through Aug. 19. (Open daily, except

Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Recent work by Enzo Cucchi, including eight large paintings, a two-part sculpture, and drawings. . . . ¶ A show of approximately a hundred and twenty drawings and watercolors from the twenties by German realists. Both shows through July 6. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Shaker design, exemplified by furniture, textiles, farming equipment, cooking utensils, etc., plus several watercolors done as religious tokens. Starts Thursday, May 29. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works by Alex Katz, including paintings, wood and aluminum cutouts, and collages. Through June 15. . . . ¶ An exhibit entitled "Sacred Images in Secular Art" includes paintings, sculptures, and photographs by a dozen contemporary artists, Italo Scanga, Audrey Flack, and Joel-Peter Witkin among them. Through July 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A show of thirty-four paintings, drawings, and prints by Cézanne on loan from the Henry and Rose Pearlman Foundation. Through July 14. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—The annual show for new members of the Academy-Institute and for recipients of awards, among them Harrison E. Salisbury, Richard Diebenkorn, Mark di Suvero, Sam Shepard, Lore Segal, Richard Kenney, Frederick Busch, Robert A. Caro, and Morton Gould. Manuscripts, paintings, and sculptures. Through June 15. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A record of the career of dancer-choreographer Bronislava Nijinska. This record includes costumes designed for her by Natalia Gontcharova and Léon Bakst; set designs by Max Ernst and Joan Miró; and a musical score for her ballet "Le Baiser de la Fée," in the handwriting of Igor Stravinsky. The dancer herself is seen in photographs of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, among others. Through July 13. . . . ¶ A display of gold and silver objects by Hungarian metalsmiths which adorned the cathedrals and palaces of that country from the ninth century to the nineteenth. Through Aug. 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A loan show of fifty drawings by Ingres, who bequeathed them to a museum in his birthplace, Montauban. Through June 15. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Japan House, 333 E. 47th St.—A show of Japanese porcelains, first and foremost (but also Japanese-influenced wares from China and Europe), which were exported to England when a passion for Arita and Kakiemon gripped collectors there. These particular pieces are from Burghley House and most appear on its inventory lists dated 1688 and 1690. Through July 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of drawings, watercolors, prints, and photographs that document British rule in India. Photographs by Beato, Frith, and Bourne are included. Through July 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—Drawings and models by British architects, primarily, spanning three hundred years—from Inigo Jones to Sir Edwin Lutyens. The subjects are generically called country houses but are known individually as Hampton Court Palace, Blenheim, Castle Drogo, etc. Through June 29. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—A display of English and American lit-

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erary material that the Berg Collection has acquired over the past ten years—the typescript of Virginia Woolf's play, "Freshwater," correspondence between W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, and a rare copy of Katherine Anne Porter's second novel, "Outline of Mexican Arts and Crafts," for instance. (Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Contemporary artists Al Loving and Howardena Pindell are each represented by eighteen paintings and collages. Through June 12. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—A film by Charles Atlas, "Hail the New Puritan," which stars the British dancer Michael Clark, Thursday, May 29, at 8. . . . ¶ A program of performances by four pairs of artists, among them Peter Nagy and David Robbins, Friday, May 30, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Music: Details at 11, Sussan Deihim and Richard Horowitz, and Chris Cochrane, Wednesday, June 4, at 9; Damage, Guy Klucevsek, and Myra Melford, Thursday, June 5, at 9; Andrew Cyrille and Daniel Ponce, Ned Rothenberg, and David Linton, Friday June 6, at 9; Bosho, Paul Lemos and Joe Papa, and Deidre Murray and Fred Hopkins, Saturday, June 7, at 9.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Jim Neu (performance), Fridays, May 30 and June 6, at 10:30; Beth Lapides (performance), Saturdays, May 31 and June 7, at 10:30. . . . ¶ Three music programs from Sound Wave: Yoshimasa Wada, Linda Fisher, and David Garland, Friday, May 30, at 9; Ellen Fullman, Frankie Mann and Sher Doruff, and Nigel Rollings, Saturday, May 31, at 9; David Behrman, Brooks Williams, and Andrew Culver, Sunday, June 1, at 9.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911, and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

Horizons '86, Music as Theatre—Final performances—Wednesday, May 28, at 8: Gunther Schuller conducting the New York Philharmonic in a Louis Andriessen-Stockhausen program, with Jean Kopperud, clarinet, and Ben Herman, drums. . . . ¶ Friday, May 30, at 8: Gunther Schuller conducting the New York Philharmonic in a program of music by Hale Smith, Morton Feldman, Toru Takemitsu, Arvo Pärt, and Witold Lutoslawski; with Marina Kruglikov and Kerry McDermott, violin; the Gregg Smith Singers; and the Percussion Group/Cincinnati. . . . ¶ Monday, June 2, at 8: Luciano Berio conducting Electric Phoenix and Speculum Musicae in a joint concert of works by Mr. Berio. . . . ¶ Tuesday, June 3, at 8: The Steve Reich Group performing a work by Mr. Reich and the Paul Dresher Ensemble performing a work by Mr. Dresher, Rinde Eckert, and Richard E. T. White. . . . ¶ Wednesday, June 4, at 8: Leonard Slatkin conducting the New York Philharmonic in a program of music by Bernard Rands, Jacob Druckman, and John Corigliano; with Jan DeGaetani and Kimball Wheeler, mezzo-sopranos. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

Steven Masi—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, May 28, at 8.)

New York Woodwind Quintet—The last in a series of concerts, this one with Gilbert Kalish, piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, May 29, at 8.)

Kenn Hicks—Tenor. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, May 29, at 8.)

Dessoff Choirs—Amy Kaiser directing a Mozart-Haydn program, with vocal soloists and an orchestra. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Thursday, May 29, at 8. For information about tickets, call 935-2551.)

Richard Nanes—Piano, in a program of his own compositions. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Saturday, May 31, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Rie Schmidt and Benjamin Verdery—Flutist and classical guitarist. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, May 31, at 9.)

Valerie Coates—Contralto, with assisting artists. (St. Stephen's Church, 122 W. 69th St. Sunday, June 1, at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Metropolitan Greek Chorale—George Tsontakis directing, with the American Brass Quintet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, June 1, at 3.)

Seta Karakashian—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, June 3, at 7:30.)

Episteme—Anthony Davis, composer-pianist, and six other musicians. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Tuesday, June 3, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Elise Tobin and Lyra—A program of solo cello works and contemporary works for a viola da gamba/harpsichord trio that will include guest artist Judith Davidoff. (Alternative Museum, 17 White St. Wednesday, June 4, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New York New Music Ensemble—A program of works by William Thomas McKinley. With the Eroica Brass Quintet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, June 5, at 8.)

Concordia: A Chamber Symphony—Marin Alsop conducting a program part classical and part jazz, with Steven Harlos, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, June 6, at 8.)

Canticum Novum Singers—A program of English music, with Walter Hilse, piano and organ. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, June 6, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New York Latvian Concert Choir and the Bronx Arts Ensemble Orchestra—Andrejs Jansons directing a joint concert of Latvian choral and symphonic music, with Arthur Ozolinš, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, June 7, at 2:30.)

Note—Stanley Ritchie, baroque violin, and Elizabeth Wright, harpsichord, will give a recital in the Garden Court of the Frick Collection (1 E. 70th St.) on Wednesday, June 11, at 5:30. Free tickets, limited to two per applicant, will be issued starting Monday, June 2, in the order that written applications are received on that day (not before). A self-addressed envelope should be enclosed.

SPORTS

Baseball—**Mets** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Los Angeles, Wednesday and Thursday, May 28-29, at 7:35. . . . ¶ San Francisco, Friday, May 30, at 7:35; Saturday, May 31, at 7:05; and Sunday, June 1, at 1:35. . . . ¶ San Diego, Monday through Wednesday, June 2-4, at 7:35. . . . **Yankees** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Baltimore, Friday, June 6, at 7:30, and Saturday, June 7, at 1:30.

Crew—Intercollegiate Rowing Association Regatta. (Onondaga Lake, Syracuse. Thursday through Saturday, June 5-7.) . . . ¶ Yale-Harvard Regatta. (New London. Saturday, June 7, starting at 5; varsity race at 6:30.)

Golf—Westchester Classic. (Westchester Country Club, Harrison. Thursday through Sunday, June 5-8.)

Racing—At **Belmont**: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1; through Monday, July 28. The Red Smith Handicap, Saturday, May 31; the New York Handicap, Sunday, June 1; the Nassau County, Friday, June 6; and the Belmont, Saturday, June 7. (Frequent trains leave Penn Station for the track Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays between 10:45 and 1:13, and Saturdays and Sundays between 11:01 and 1:19.) . . . **Garden State Park,** Cherry Hill, N.J.: Weeknights at 7:30; through Saturday, June 14. . . . **Monmouth Park,** Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30, from Friday, June 6, through Saturday, Aug. 30.

Running—L'eggs Mini Marathon, of ten kilometres, with close to seven thousand participating, will start at ten on Saturday, May 31, in Central Park near the Tavern on the Green, and finish at almost the same place.

Trotting—At **Roosevelt Raceway,** Westbury: Nightly at 8; through Monday, June 16. . . . **Saratoga Raceway,** Saratoga Springs: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; through Saturday, Nov. 22. . . . **Meadowlands**: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Aug. 2.

ET ALIA

Auctions—At Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sunday, June 1, from 1 to 5.)—Thursday, May 29, at 10:15 and 2: American paintings, drawings, and sculptures. . . . ¶ Friday, May 30, at 10:15 and 2: American Indian art. . . . ¶ Saturday, May 31, at 10:15 and 2: European works of art, armor, furniture, and tapestries. . . . ¶ Saturday, May 31, at 10:15 and 2: Oriental rugs. . . . ¶ Tuesday, June 3, at 10:15 and 2: Chinese paintings. Exhibition starts Friday, May 30. . . . ¶ Wednesday, June 4, at 10:15 and 2: Chinese works of art. Exhibition starts Saturday, May 31. . . . ¶ Thursday, June 5, at 10:15: Old Master paintings. Exhibition starts Saturday, May 31, at 1. . . . ¶ Thursday, June 5, at 2: Nineteenth-century sporting paintings. Exhibition starts Saturday, May 31, at 1.

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit—The semiannual show will be on view Saturday and Sunday, May 31-June 1, and Saturday and Sunday, June 7-8, from noon until sundown.

COMING EVENTS

(A checklist for readers who plan ahead.)

Automobile Racing—At the Meadowlands: United States Grand Prix, June 29.

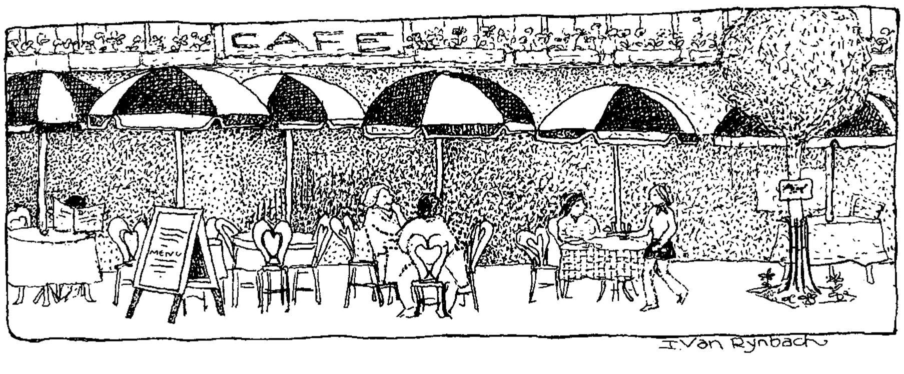
Golf—U.S.G.A. Open Championship. (Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, Southampton. June 12-15.)

Racing—At Atlantic City, Mays Landing, N.J.: June 20-Aug. 30.

Music—Saratoga Performing Arts Center, June 6-Aug. 31. . . . ¶ The Metropolitan Opera will present concert performances in Central Park on June 17 ("Aida") and June 23 ("Roméo et Juliette"). . . . ¶ JVC Jazz Festival (Avery Fisher Hall, Town Hall, and Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J., among other places), June 20-29. . . . ¶ Goldman Memorial Band Concerts, in Damrosch Park, June 25-Aug. 3. . . . ¶ Tanglewood Festival, Lenox, Mass., June 27-Aug. 31. . . . ¶ Caramoor Festival, Katonah, N.Y., June 28-Aug. 24. . . . ¶ The New York City Opera will open at the New York State Theatre (870-5570) on Tuesday, July 1, with Leonard Bernstein's "Candide," and will run through Nov. 16. . . . ¶ Mostly Mozart Festival, Avery Fisher Hall (874-2424), July 7-Aug. 23.

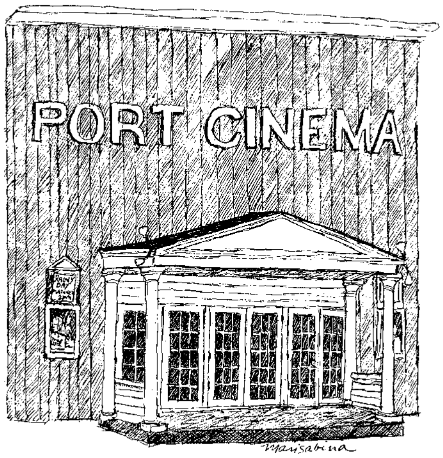
Dance—Paris Opera Ballet, at the Metropolitan Opera House, July 9-19.

Other Dates—Second-quarter Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax payments are due Monday, June 16. . . . ¶ The first day of summer is June 21. . . . ¶ The Fourth of July falls on a Friday.



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through June 5: "Dreamchild" (†) and "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).
From June 6: "Eléna et les Hommes" (1956; directed by Jean Renoir; in French), with Ingrid Bergman; and "Dreamchild" (†).

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through June 5: "Echo Park" (Robert Dornhelm), with Susan Dey and Tom Hulce.
From June 6: "SpaceCamp" (Harry Winer), with Kate Capshaw and Lea Thompson.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Short Circuit" (John Badham), with Ally Sheedy and Steve Guttenberg.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Cobra" (George P. Cosmatos), with Sylvester Stallone.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Top Gun" (Tony Scott), with Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis.
Theatre 2: "Wise Guys" (†).
Theatre 3: "Poltergeist II: The Other Side" (Brian Gibson), with JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through the afternoon of May 29: "No Retreat No Surrender" (Corey Yuen).
From May 30: "Jake Speed" (Andrew Lane), with Wayne Crawford.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through May 29: "The Color Purple" (†).
From May 30: To be announced.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Cobra" (George P. Cosmatos), with Sylvester Stallone.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through June 5: "The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).
From June 6: "SpaceCamp" (Harry Winer), with Kate Capshaw and Lea Thompson.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Bliss" (Ray Lawrence).

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Echo Park" (Robert Dornhelm), with Susan Dey and Tom Hulce. From May 30: "Jake Speed" (Andrew Lane), with Wayne Crawford.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Letter to Brezhnev" (Chris Bernard).
Theatre 2: "Violets Are Blue" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through May 29: "Death of a Soldier" (Philippe Mora), with James Coburn and Reb Brown. From May 30: "Big Trouble."
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Desert Hearts" (Donna Deitch). From May 30: "A Great Wall" (Peter Wang; in English and Mandarin).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Short Circuit" (John Badham), with Ally Sheedy and Steve Guttenberg.
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Desert Bloom" (Eugene Corr), with Jon Voight and JoBeth Williams. From May 30: "At Close Range" (James Foley), with Sean Penn and Christopher Walken.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Hannah and Her Sisters" (†).

Loews New York Twin 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Ginger and Fred" (†).
Theatre 2: "Poltergeist II: The Other Side" (Brian Gibson), with JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"3 Men and a Cradle" (Coline Serreau; in French).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Sweet Liberty" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through May 29: "The Color Purple" (†).
From May 30: "At Close Range" (James Foley), with Sean Penn and Christopher Walken.

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Top Gun" (Tony Scott), with Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis.
Theatre 2: "Poltergeist II: The Other Side" (Brian Gibson), with JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through May 29: "Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling" (†).
From May 30: "Jake Speed" (Andrew Lane), with Wayne Crawford.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Cobra" (George P. Cosmatos), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 2: "Short Circuit" (John Badham), with Ally Sheedy and Steve Guttenberg.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: A program of nine documentaries and avant-garde short films that originally premièred at the film society Cinema 16.
Theatre 2: Through May 30: A program of twelve Chuck Jones cartoons. May 31-June 1: A program of twelve Bugs Bunny cartoons from the forties and fifties. June 2-4: A program of twelve cartoons by Tex Avery. June 5: A program of twelve Daffy Duck cartoons from the forties and fifties. From June 6: "The Cosmic Eye" (directed by Faith Hubley), a full-length animated film.

Bleecker St. Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through May 29: "Parting Glances" (Bill Sherwood). From May 30: "Home of the Brave" (Laurie Anderson), with Anderson.
Theatre 2: A program of animated short films.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through May 29: "Desert Bloom" (Eugene Corr), with Jon Voight and JoBeth Williams. From May 30: "Signal 7" (Rob Nilsson).
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Doña Herlinda and Her Son" (Jaime Humberto Hermosillo; a Mexican film, in Spanish). From May 30: "Absolute Beginners" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Brazil" (†).

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sweet Liberty" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Desert Hearts" (Donna Deitch).
Theatre 2: "F/X" (†).
Theatre 3: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (†).
Theatre 4: "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Ronia, Robber's Daughter" (Tage Danielsson; in Swedish).
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "9½ Weeks" (Adrian Lyne), with Mickey Rourke and Kim Basinger. From May 30: "Desert Bloom" (Eugene Corr), with Jon Voight and JoBeth Williams.
Theatre 3: "Short Circuit" (John Badham), with Ally Sheedy and Steve Guttenberg.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Femmes de Personne" (Christopher Frank; in French), with Marthe Keller, Philippe Léotard, and Jean-Louis Trintignant.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through May 29: "Absolute Beginners" (†).
From May 30: Theatre temporarily closed.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
Through May 29: "Wise Guys" (†).
From May 30: Theatre closed.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through May 29: "Home of the Brave" (Laurie Anderson), with Anderson.
From May 30: "Absolute Beginners" (†).

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
"On the Edge" (Ron Nilsson), with Bruce Dern and John Marley.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"A Room with a View" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"F/X" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Desert Bloom" (Eugene Corr), with Jon Voight and JoBeth Williams.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Vagabond" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Trip to Bountiful" (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Ran" (†).
Theatre 2: "What Happened to Kerouac?" (Richard Lerner and Lewis MacAdams), a documentary.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hard Choices" (Rick King).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling" (†).
Theatre 2: "Cobra" (George P. Cosmatos), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 3: "Sweet Liberty" (†).
Theatre 4: "Poltergeist II: The Other Side" (Brian Gibson), with JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson.
Theatre 5: "Top Gun" (Tony Scott), with Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis.
Theatre 6: "Short Circuit" (John Badham), with Ally Sheedy and Steve Guttenberg.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Cobra" (George P. Cosmatos), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Turtle Diary" (†) and "Dance with a Stranger" (†). From May 30 (tentative): "Absolute Beginners" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 29: "No Retreat No Surrender" (Corey Yuen). From May 30: "A Nightmare on Elm Street" (1984; Wes Craven), with John Saxon and Ronee Blakley; and "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).
Theatre 4: Through May 29: "Hannah and

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Her Sisters" (†). From May 30: "Jake Speed" (Andrew Lane), with Wayne Crawford.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "The Color Purple" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (†).
Theatre 3: "8 Million Ways to Die" (†).
Theatre 4: Through June 5: "F/X" (†). From June 6: "SpaceCamp" (directed by Harry Winer), with Kate Capshaw and Lea Thompson.
Theatre 5: Through June 5: "No Retreat No Surrender" (Corey Yuen). From June 6: "Raw Deal" (John Irvin), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Theatre 6: "Legend" (Ridley Scott), with Tom Cruise.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
Through May 29: "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (†).
From May 30: "Jake Speed" (Andrew Lane), with Wayne Crawford.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Critters" (Stephen Herek), with Dee Wallace Stone and M. Emmet Walsh. From May 30: "A Nightmare on Elm Street" (1984; Wes Craven), with John Saxon and Ronee Blakley; and "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).
Theatre 3: Through May 29: "Blue City" (Michelle Manning), with Judd Nelson and Ally Sheedy. From May 30: "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (†).
Theatre 4: "Wise Guys" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
"Top Gun" (Tony Scott), with Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)
Theatre 1: "Sweet Liberty" (†).
Theatre 2: "Poltergeist II: The Other Side" (Brian Gibson), with JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Police Academy 3: Back in Training" (Jerry Paris), with Steve Guttenberg.

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)
"Sleeping Beauty" (1959), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Short Circuit" (John Badham), with Ally Sheedy and Steve Guttenberg. From May 30: "A Nightmare on Elm Street" (1984; Wes Craven), with John Saxon and Ronee Blakley; and "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
Theatre 1: "Cobra" (George P. Cosmatos), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 2: "Cobra."

U. A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: Through May 29: "Ninja Turf." From May 30: "At Close Range" (James Foley), with Sean Penn and Christopher Walken.
Theatre 2: Through May 29: "Violets Are Blue" (†). From May 30: "Demons."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through May 29: "Straw Dogs" (1972; directed by Sam Peckinpah), with Dustin Hoffman and Susan George; and "The Wild Bunch" (1969; Sam Peckinpah), with William Holden, Ernest Borgnine, and Robert Ryan.
May 30-31: "The Tin Drum" (1980; Volker Schlöndorff; in German), with David Bennent; and "Das Boot" (1982; Wolfgang Petersen; in German).
June 1: "Diva" (†) and "Desperately Seeking Susan" (†).
June 2-3: "Lady Chatterley's Lover" (1959; Marc Allégret; in French), with Danielle Darrieux; and "Women in Love" (1970; Ken Russell), with Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, Glenda Jackson, and Jennie Linden.

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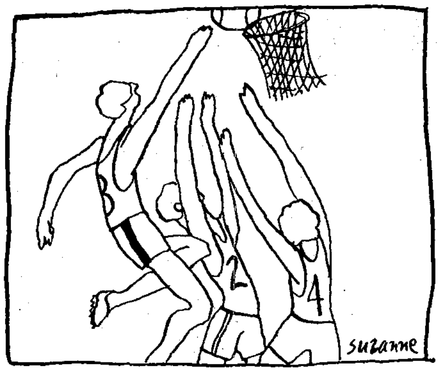
June 4-5: "Caligula" (1980), with Malcolm McDowell.
June 6-7: "Amadeus" (1984; Miloš Forman), with F. Murray Abraham and Tom Hulce.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
May 28: "Citizen Kane" (1941; Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, and Everett Sloane; and "The Magnificent Ambersons" (1942; Orson Welles), with Dolores Costello, Joseph Cotten, Tim Holt, and Agnes Moorehead.
May 29-31: "Journey Into Fear" (1943; Orson Welles and Norman Foster), with Welles, Dolores Del Rio, and Joseph Cotten; and "The Third Man" (1950; Carol Reed), with Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard.
June 1-2: "A Man for All Seasons" (†) and "Moby Dick" (1956 †).
June 3-4: "Catch-22" (†); and "A Safe Place" (1971; Henry Jaglom), with Tuesday Weld, Orson Welles, and Jack Nicholson.
June 5-7: "The Long, Hot Summer" (1958; Martin Ritt), with Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Anthony Franciosa, and Orson Welles; and "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948; Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
May 28: "Tosca's Kiss" (1984; Daniel Schmid; in Italian); and "Allegro Non Troppo" (1977; Bruno Bozzetto; in Italian), a six-episode animated and live-action film.
May 29: "Queen Kelly" (1929; Erich von Stroheim; a silent film), with Gloria Swanson; and "Blind Husbands" (1918; Erich von Stroheim; a silent film), with Sam de Grasse, Francilla Billington, von Stroheim, and Gibson Gowland.
May 30: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972; Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "The Conformist" (1970; Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, and Dominique Sanda.
May 31: "Fellini Satyricon" (1970; in Italian) and "Fellini's Roma" (1972; in English and Italian), both films directed by Federico Fellini.
June 1: "The Spirit of the Beehive" (1973; Victor Erice; in Spanish); and "Elisa, Vida Mia" (1977; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Fernando Rey and Geraldine Chaplin.
June 2: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons.
June 3: "Before Stonewall: The Making of a Gay and Lesbian Community" (1985; Greta Schiller), a documentary; and "Streamers" (1983; Robert Altman), with Matthew Modine.
June 4: "Ragtime" (†); and "Welcome to Hard Times" (1967; Burt Kennedy), with Henry Fonda and Janice Rule.
June 5: "Private Parts" (1973; Paul Bartel), with Ayn Ruymen; and "Eating Raoul" (†).
June 6-7: "Crime Wave" (1985; Sam Raimi).



Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
May 28: "Medea" (1971; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with Maria Callas; and "A Dream of Passion" (1978; Jules Dassin; in English and Greek), with Melina Mercouri and Ellen Burstyn.
May 29: "The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone" (1961; José Quintero), with Vivien Leigh, Warren Beatty, and Lotte Lenya; and "The Rose Tattoo" (1955; Daniel Mann), with Anna Magnani, Burt Lancaster, Marisa Pavan, and Ben Cooper.
May 30-31: "Pink Flamingos" (1974; John Waters), with Divine; and "Multiple Maniacs" (1977; John Waters).
June 1: "Open City" (1945; Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Anna Magnani; and "Paisan" (1946; Roberto Rossellini; in English, French, Italian, and German).
June 2: "The Man with the Golden Arm" (†) and "The Lost Weekend" (†).
June 3: "His Girl Friday" (†) and "My Man Godfrey" (1936 †).
June 4: "Shanghai Express" (1932; Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Dietrich, Olive Brook, Warner Oland, and Anna May Wong; and "The Blue Angel" (1929; Josef von Sternberg; in German), with Marlene Dietrich, Emil Janning, and Hans Albers.
June 5: A program of cartoons.
June 6-7: "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" (1935; Stuart Walker), with Claude Rains, Valerie Hobson, Heather Angel, Douglass Montgomery, and David Manner; and "Emlyn Williams as Charles Dickens."

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
May 28: "Prince of Foxes" (1949; Henry King), with Tyrone Power, Wanda Hendrix, and Orson Welles; and "The Mark of Zorro" (1940; Rouben Mamoulian), with Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell, and Basil Rathbone.
May 29: "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon" (1943) and "The Woman in Green" (1945), two films in the Basil Rathbone–Nigel Bruce Holmes-Watson series, both directed by Roy William Neill.
May 30-31: "Dark Passage" (1947; Delmer Daves), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead; and "To Have and Have Not" (1944; Howard Hawks), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Walter Brennan.
June 1: "La Guerre Est Finie" (†) and "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (†).
June 2: "Wild Strawberries" (1957; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Victor Sjöström and Ingrid Thulin; and "Shame" (1968; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Liv Ullmann, Max von Sydow, and Gunnar Björnstrand.
June 3: "Broadway Thru a Keyhole" (1933; Lowell Sherman), with Constance Cummings and Russ Columbo; and "Go Into Your Dance" (1935; Archie Mayo), with Al Jolson and Ruby Keeler.
June 4: "The Night of the Hunter" (†); and "Home from the Hill" (1960; Vincente Minnelli), with Robert Mitchum, Eleanor Parker, George Hamilton, and George Peppard.
June 5: "The Rules of the Game" (1939; Jean Renoir; in French), with Marcel Dalio and Nora Gregor; and "Pépé le Moko" (†).
June 6-7: "On the Waterfront" (1954; Elia Kazan), with Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, Eva Marie Saint, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger; and "The Wild One" (1954; Laslo Benedek), with Marlon Brando, Mary Murphy, and Lee Marvin.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)
Theatre 1: May 29 at 2:30 and 6: "The Trial of Vivienne Ware" (1932; directed by William K. Howard); and four musical sequences by Busby Berkeley. . . . ¶ May 30 at 2:30: "Il Segno di Venere" (1955; Dino Risi; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Vittorio De Sica, Sophia Loren, Franca Valeri, and Alberto Sordi. . . . ¶ May 30 at 6: "Too Bad She's Bad" (1955; Alessandro Blasetti; in Italian, with

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English subtitles), with Sophia Loren, Vittorio De Sica, and Marcello Mastroianni. . . . ¶ May 31 at 2: "I Vitelloni" (1953; Federico Fellini; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Franco Interlenghi, Alberto Sordi, Franco Fabrizi, and Leopoldo Trieste. . . . ¶ May 31 at 5: "Poor but Beautiful" (1956; Dino Risi; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Marisa Allasio. . . . ¶ June 1 at 2:30: "The White Sheik" (1952; Federico Fellini; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Alberto Sordi, Leopoldo Trieste, and Giulietta Masina. . . . ¶ June 1 at 5: "Bello Onesto Emigrato Australia Sposerebbe Compaesana Illibata" (1971; Luigi Zampa; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Alberto Sordi and Claudia Cardinale. . . . ¶ June 2 at 2:30: "I Vitelloni." . . . ¶ June 2 at 6: "Poor but Beautiful." . . . ¶ June 3 at 2:30: "Days of Love" (1954; Giuseppe De Santis; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Marcello Mastroianni and Marina Vlady. . . . ¶ June 3 at 6: "Gold of Naples" (1954; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian, with English subtitles), with De Sica, Sophia Loren, and Totò. . . . ¶ June 5 at 2:30 and 6: "Zero for Conduct" (1933; Jean Vigo; in French); and "Vampyr" (1932; Carl Th. Dreyer; in German, with Danish subtitles). . . . ¶ June 6 at 2:30: "Gold of Naples." . . . ¶ June 6 at 6: "Days of Love." . . . ¶ June 7 at 2: "Love and Larceny" (1959; Dino Risi; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Vittorio Gassman. . . . ¶ June 7 at 5: "The Great War" (1959; Mario Monicelli; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Vittorio Gassman, Alberto Sordi, Bernard Blier, and Silvana Mangano.

THEATRE 2: May 29 at 3 and 6:30: "Style Wars" (1983; Tony Silver and Henry Chalfant), a documentary. . . . ¶ May 30 at 3: "Folies Bergère de Paris" (1935; Roy Del Ruth), with Maurice Chevalier, Merle Oberon, and Ann Sothern. . . . ¶ May 30 at 6:30 and May 31 at 2:30: "Whirl of Life" (1915; Oliver D. Bailey; a silent film), with Vernon and Irene Castle. . . . ¶ May 31 at 5:30 and June 1 at 2:30: "The Thief of Bagdad" (1924; Raoul Walsh; a silent film), with Douglas Fairbanks and Anna May Wong. . . . ¶ June 1 at 5:30: "Folies Bergère de Paris." . . . ¶ June 3 at 3: "The Toll Gate" (1920; Lambert Hillyer; a silent film), with William S. Hart and Anna Q. Nilsson. . . . ¶ June 3 at 6:30: "Elephant Boy" (1937; Robert Flaherty and Zoltán Korda), with Sabu. . . . ¶ June 5 at 3 and 6:30: "A Man When He Is a Man" (1983; Valeria Sarmiento), a documentary. . . . ¶ June 6 at 3: "Tabu" (1931; F. W. Murnau and Robert Flaherty). . . . ¶ June 6 at 6:30: "The Toll Gate." . . . ¶ June 7 at 2:30: "Elephant Boy." . . . ¶ June 7 at 5:30: "Tabu."

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—A retrospective of videotapes by Gary Hill: Program I, consisting of eight short works, showing Tuesdays at 1:15 and 5:15; Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:30; and Sundays at 12:15 and 4:30. . . . Program II, consisting of seven short works, showing Tuesdays at 2:30 and 6:30; Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30; and Sundays at 1:30. . . . Program III, consisting of "Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia)" (1984) and "URA ARU (the backside exists)" (1985-86), showing Tuesdays at 4; Wednesdays through Saturdays at 11:45 and 3:45; and Sundays at 3. Closed Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS—With Ed O'Connell, Patsy Kensit, and David Bowie; directed by Julien Temple. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ziegfeld; through May 29. . . . ¶ Waverly, and 57th St. Playhouse; starting May 30. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; starting May 30, tentative.)

BRAZIL—Terry Gilliam, of the Monty Python troupe, presents a retro-futurist fantasy—a melancholy, joke-ridden view of the horribleness of where we are now and the worse horribleness of where we're heading. The title refers to pop escapism of the past—what you can only dream about in the squalor and sporadic terrorist violence of an Anglo-American police state "somewhere in the twentieth century." Visually, it's an original, bravura piece of moviemaking. The central character (Jonathan Pryce) is a lowly clerk, a drone; in pursuit of the girl (Kim Greist) he has glimpsed in his dreams, he runs afoul of the state apparatus. The episodes lack dramatic definition, just as the gags do; they all run together and blur. Yet Gilliam's vision is an organic thing on the screen—and that's a considerable achievement. With Robert De Niro, Katherine Helmond, Michael Palin, Ian Holm, Ian Richardson, and Kathryn Pogson. The script is by Gilliam, Tom Stoppard, and Charles McKeown. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/10/86.) (8th St. Playhouse.)

CATCH-22 (1970)—Mike Nichols' third picture was this hugely ambitious failure. He gave Joseph Heller's black comedy about the insanity of military life a grandiloquent staging, and the picture got so heavy and full of message that the ironies were buried. There are startling effects and good revue touches here and there, but the picture goes on and on, as if it were determined to impress us. With Alan Arkin, Jon Voight, Richard Benjamin, Art Garfunkel, Buck Henry (who also wrote the script), Martin Balsam, Orson Welles, Martin Sheen, Jack Gilford, Tony Perkins, and Bob Newhart. (Regency; June 3-4.)

THE COLOR PURPLE—The popular novel by Alice Walker is about the bonding of Southern black women in the first half of the century. It's written in a raw, cadenced dialect, and it has a joyous emotional swing to it. Steven Spielberg, who directed the movie version, appears to have taken the novel seriously—inspirational tone, pop-folk religiosity, triumph of the human spirit, and all—and been intimidated by it. This family saga, spanning more than thirty years, is the clumsiest, least confident feature he has done. He filters everything through movies and sees rural Georgia in 1909 the way a European director might. The picture is muffled—it seems to be taking place in a made-up, faraway kingdom. With Desreta Jackson as the young Celie and Whoopi Goldberg taking over the role, Danny Glover, Willard Pugh, Margaret Avery, and Oprah Winfrey. (12/30/85) (Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ East-side Cinema, and U. A. East; through May 29.)

DANCE WITH A STRANGER—Set in London in 1954 and 1955, and featuring Miranda Richardson as Ruth Ellis, the demi-prostitute who put a few slugs in her weakling young lover (played by Rupert Everett) and was the last woman in England to be sent to the gallows, this English film might be described as kitchen-sink *film noir*. The director, Mike Newell, doesn't give you a minute's relief. The picture is all style—style used to show us the shabbiness of the characters' lives and how they're all trapped, doing what's inevitable. With Ian Holm. (8/26/85) (Olympia Quad; through May 29.)

DESPERATELY SEEKING SUSAN (1985)—Set in the punk world, it's a mistaken-identity fantasy about doe-eyed Roberta (Rosanna Arquette), a suburban housewife in New Jersey, who becomes fixated on a drifter named Susan (played by the rock star Madonna). This attempt at screwball charm was directed by Susan Seidelman, who wipes out her actors. All their responsiveness is cut off—there's nothing going on in them. No subtext—nothing. The transactions between the people on the screen are stupefying (and often in woozy slow-motion, like a rock video going poetic). The cast includes Robert Joy, Aidan Quinn, Mark Blum, Laurie Metcalf, and the comedian Steven Wright. (4/22/85) (Cinema Village; June 1.)

DIVA (1981)—A romantic thriller from France, made by Jean-Jacques Beineix, who has a fabulous camera technique and understands the pleasures to be had from a picture that doesn't take itself too seriously. The diva is an awesomely beautiful black American soprano (Wilhelmenia Fernandez) who refuses to make recordings. Frédéric Andrei is the wide-eyed eighteen-year-old postal messenger who adores her; he sneaks his tape machine into her concert—and all hell breaks loose around him. The unfazable heroine (the fourteen-year-old Thuy An Luu) is a post-Godardian tootsie—in her short-short skirts and transparent plastic coat she's a lollipop wrapped in cellophane. In French. (Cinema Village; June 1.)

DOWN AND OUT IN BEVERLY HILLS—Jokes you can't explain may be the best kind, and the director Paul Mazursky is a master of them. When he gets rolling here, you're not responding to single jokes—it's the whole gestalt of the movie that's funny. Nick Nolte plays the shaggy, smelly drifter who attempts suicide and is rescued by a self-made millionaire (Richard Dreyfuss). Taken into the millionaire's guest cabaña, the bum is decked out in silk lounging robes; he's soon lord of the sunshine manor. As Dreyfuss's creamy-skinned, pampered wife, Bette Midler is more seductive than in her other screen roles, and she has a warped charm. Her eyes are pixillated; she's ready for anything. As a record-producer neighbor, Little Richard uses the maniacal energy that went into his singing; he has a bursting presence—you look at him and laugh. Peppy and pleasurable, this is one of the most sheerly beautiful comedies ever shot. With Elizabeth Peña, Tracy Nelson, Evan Richards, Donald F. Muhich, and Mazursky himself as a curly-haired accountant. (2/10/86) (D. W. Griffith, and Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through May 29. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting May 30.)

DREAMCHILD—Coral Browne plays Lewis Carroll's Alice in 1932, just before her eightieth birthday, when she sails to New York to speak at the Lewis Carroll centenary celebration. Disoriented by the voyage and exhilarated by New York City, she experiences a second childhood; her mind wanders back to 1862, when the young Reverend Charles Dodgson (Ian Holm) had attempted to entertain her and her sisters by spinning his nonsense tale. It's only now that the elderly Alice grasps how deeply tormented he was and that he loved her. And with New York jogging her out of her confining Victorian primness, she sees how narrow her life has been. Written by Dennis Potter and directed by Gavin Millar, the picture is a curio, but it's very enjoyable, and in some scenes it achieves levels of feeling that movies rarely get near. Nothing in Coral Browne's other screen performances suggests the frailty and beauty she brings to her Alice, and Ian Holm's performance is wonderful. With Amelia Shankley as Alice at ten, Jane Asher, Peter Gallagher, Nicola Cowper, and six Lewis Carroll–Tenniel creatures from Jim Henson's Creature Shop. (10/21/85) (Little Theatre, Public Theatre.)

EATING RAOUL (1982)—The director, Paul Bartel, and his five-foot-eleven star, the innately kinky Mary Woronov, play a couple of prissy squares who consider sex disgusting and want to open a nice, clean country restaurant. They raise the money they need by murdering swinging singles. This spoofy black comedy doesn't have enough going on in it—not even enough to look at. The nothingness of the movie is supposed to be its droll point, but viewers may experience sensory deprivation. With Richard Beltran, who brings some energy to the role of Raoul, Garry Goodrow, and Buck Henry. (Thalia; June 5.)

8 MILLION WAYS TO DIE—A macho fantasy about cops and robbers, coke and hookers. Jeff Bridges plays Scudder, a narcotics detective for the L.A. County Sheriff's Department, and the film, directed by Hal Ashby, has an overlush pictorial exoticism, as if being coked out comes with the territory. The script, credited to Oliver Stone and David Lee Henry (other hands were also involved), is pulpy, tawdry stuff, but it suggests more hardboiled narrative drive than Ashby delivers. The film is permeated with druggy dissociation: plot points don't connect, as though they don't matter, the actors often sound as if they're making up their lines, and Ashby seems less interested in the thriller aspect of the material than in men in a semi-stupor challenging each other. The crazy confusion of these macho shouting matches is halfway amusing—you don't know what's going on, or if the director does, either. Violence and dreaminess are blended. The story involves a bright-eyed, coke-snorting young hooker called Sunny (Alexandra Paul); when she's murdered, Scudder's suspicions settle on a sleek Colombian-American racketeer, played by Andy Garcia, who does Latino sleaze and volatility to hammy perfection, flashing his eyes like semaphores, and giving the picture a shot of energy. With Rosanna Arquette and Randy Brooks. From Lawrence Block's mystery novels featuring Matthew Scudder. The cinematography is by Stephen H. Burum. (5/19/86) (Criterion Theatres.)

F/X—Robert Mandel directed this ingenious suspense film about a movie special-effects wizard (Bryan Brown) who lets himself be bamboozled by a couple of men from the Justice Department's Witness Relocation Program; they hire him to stage the fake assassination of a Mafia boss (Jerry Orbach), so that this gangster can give evidence against his associates and be relocated without fear of reprisals. Bryan Brown underplays niftily, and he's joined by a second hero—swaggering Brian Dennehy, as a rogue cop. He grabs the movie in his choppers and shakes it up. Despite the film's high body count, it's not the kind of thriller that leaves a viewer feeling debauched. With Diane Venora, Joe Grifasi, and Jossie deGuzman. (2/24/86) (Quad Cinema, and Cinema 3. . . . ¶ Criterion Theatres; through June 5.)

Ginger and Fred—This Fellini movie is about two mediocre dancers (played by Giulietta Masina and Marcello Mastroianni)—small-timers, curiosities—who, in the nineteen-forties, entertained Italian vaudeville audiences by imitating the Astaire-Rogers numbers. Now they are being reunited, in Rome, for an appearance on a Christmas TV Special. This situation serves as a pretext for Fellini to vent his disgust at TV. He appears to be condemning TV for being a green slime that's absorbing everything, and denouncing it, too, for passing him by. With Franco Fabrizi and Frederick Ledebur. The script is by Fellini, Tonino Guerra, and Tullio Pinelli. In Italian. (4/21/86) (Loews New York Twin.)

La Guerre Est Finie (1966)—Yves Montand as the Spaniard Diego, a professional (i.e., paid) revolutionary, a courier in the Communist underground, who goes on stoically carrying out policies he knows are futile. Alain Resnais directed this attempt at an elegy on the themes of exile and of living on old ideals—living in the past. Resnais, although he allows most of Diego's associates to appear ridiculous, protects Diego very tenderly. He isn't presented as a Party hack or a tool—he's noble. The film, from a script by Jorge Semprun, is ambivalent and smooth and chic. With Ingrid Thulin, Geneviève Bujold, Michel Piccoli, and Jean Dasté. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 1.)

Hannah and Her Sisters—A minor, agreeably skillful movie by Woody Allen. It's likable, but you wish there were more to like. The principal characters are members of a show-business family, with the stable, dependable Hannah (Mia Farrow), a successful actress who manages a career and children with equal serenity, as the pivotal figure, and Barbara Hershey and Dianne Wiest as her sisters. Hannah's parents are played by Maureen O'Sullivan and the late Lloyd Nolan, her financial-consultant husband by Michael Caine, and her TV writer-producer ex-husband by Allen himself. The picture would be lifeless without him; the other roles are so thin that there's nobody else to draw us into the story, and all the vital vulgarity of Woody Allen's early movies has been drained away here. With Max von Sydow, Julie Kavner, Carrie Fisher, Daniel Stern, Sam Waterston, Tony Roberts (uncredited), and Bobby Short as himself. (2/24/86) (Beekman, Quad Cinema, Lincoln Plaza, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; through May 29.)

Hiroshima, Mon Amour (1959)—A tortured love affair between a French actress and a Japanese architect in the city that was devastated by the first atomic bomb. This was Alain Resnais's controversial début as a feature-film director; there is no controversy, however, about Emmanuèle Riva's splendid performance. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 1.)

His Girl Friday (1940)—In 1928 Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur wrote "The Front Page," the greatest newspaper comedy of them all; Howard Hawks directed this version of it, starring Cary Grant as the domineering editor Walter Burns and Rosalind Russell as Hildy Johnson, the unscrupulous crime reporter. Overlapping dialogue carries the movie along at breakneck speed; word gags take the place of the sight gags of silent comedy, as this race of brittle, cynical, childish people rush around on corrupt errands. Russell is at her comedy peak here—she wears a striped suit, uses her long-legged body for ungainly, unladylike effects, and rasps out her lines. And, as Walter Burns, Grant raises mugging to a joyful art. Burns' callousness and unscrupulousness are expressed in some of the best farce lines ever written in this country, and Grant hits those lines with a smack. The reporters—a fine crew—are Ernest Truex, Cliff Edwards, Porter Hall, Roscoe Karns, Frank Jenks, and Regis Toomey; also with Gene Lockhart, Billy Gilbert, John Qualen, Helen Mack, Ralph Bellamy, and Alma Kruger. (Thalia SoHo; June 3.)

Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling—Richard Pryor produced, directed, and is the star of this semi-autobiographical movie, which opens with Jo Jo the cokehead comedy star preparing to free-base and bursting into flame. Then, as he lies swathed in bandages in the burn ward, he thinks back over how he got there. But Pryor doesn't have the skills to tell his story in this form. As a standup entertainer, he sees the crazy side of his sorrows; he transforms pain and chaos into comedy. As a moviemaker, he's a novice presenting us with clumps of unformed experience. It isn't even raw; the juice has been drained away. With E'lon Cox, Carmen McRae, and Diahnne Abbott. (5/5/86) (Manhattan, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Six-plex, and R.K.O. Century National Twin. . . . ¶ 86th St. East; through May 29.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor. But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with. This Brazilian production, made in English, from Manuel Puig's novel, was shot in São Paulo. (8/26/85) (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; through June 5.)

The Lost Weekend (1945)—Charles Jackson's novel about a well-brought-up, frustrated, dipsomaniacal writer who goes on a five-day binge that lands him in Bellevue was turned into an unusually daring popular melodrama by the writing team of Charles Brackett (who produced) and Billy Wilder (who directed). As the star, Ray Milland, reprieved from his usual lightweight leading-man roles, surprised the public with his tautness and irony. The picture lacks fluidity, and the slowly paced scenes seem overcalculated. What it has is the Brackett-and-Wilder specialty—a distinctive cruel (and sometimes cruelly funny) edge. And there are some famous sequences: the hero's lust for a drink during "Libiamo," the opening aria of "La Traviata;" his long, plodding walk along Third Avenue in an attempt to hawk his typewriter when the pawnshops are closed for Yom Kippur. With Frank Faylen, Howard Da Silva, and Jane Wyman. (Thalia SoHo; June 2.)

A Man for All Seasons (1966)—The director, Fred Zinnemann, places himself at the service of Robert Bolt's play about the moral tug-of-war between Sir Thomas More (Paul Scofield) and Henry VIII (Robert Shaw), and the results are tasteful and moderately enjoyable. The weakness is that More is the only man of honor in the movie, and he's got all the good lines. Scofield is so refined, so controlled, so dignified, so obviously "subtle" he's like a man of conscience in a school play. With Orson Welles, Leo McKern, Susannah York, Wendy Hiller, Nigel Davenport, John Hurt, and Corin Redgrave. (Regency; June 1-2.)

The Man with the Golden Arm (1955)—Frank Sinatra's performance is pure gold, but the director, Otto Preminger, goes for sensationalism. The film is a lot more entertaining than the other pictures about dope addiction in that period, though. It's based on Nelson Algren's Chicago-set novel about the hot poker dealer and addict Frankie. Sinatra's performance is rhythmic, tense, and instinc-

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tive, yet beautifully controlled, and of course he has a performer's presence. With Eleanor Parker, Kim Novak, Arnold Stang, and Darren McGavin. (Thalia SoHo; June 2.)

Moby Dick (1956)—It's an impressive attempt to be faithful to Melville, but for all his dedication to this ambitious project, the director, John Huston, must not have been able to keep up his energy level; at times, his work seems surprisingly perfunctory. The film begins imaginatively, but Gregory Peck—the least demonic of leading men—is a disastrous Ahab; bearded, he looks like a stock-company Lincoln. And the movie doesn't add up to anything approaching the novel; it lacks the unity, the rhythm, the poetry, the mind at work. There are still more than enough reasons to see it. Ray Bradbury and Huston wrote the screenplay. With Richard Basehart, Orson Welles, and Leo Genn. (Regency; June 1-2.)

My Beautiful Laundrette—A startlingly fresh movie about life in South London among the surly white street gangs and the Pakistani immigrants. In the foreground is a love affair between a dark-eyed, softly handsome, almost flowerlike Pakistani teen-ager, Omar (Gordon Warnecke), and a young blond street lout, Johnny (Daniel Day Lewis). They become partners when Omar persuades his slumlord uncle (Saeed Jaffrey) to let him have a ratty-looking failed laundrette, and the two boys, using stolen money, turn it into the laundrette of their flashy dreams. Directed by Stephen Frears, from a witty script by the young playwright Hanif Kureishi, the film catches you up in the racketeering and decay of modern big-city life; you feel that your blinders have been taken off. It's an enormous pleasure to see a movie that's really about something, and that doesn't lay on any syrupy coating to make the subject go down easily. (It's down before you notice it.) The cast includes Shirley Anne Field, Roshan Seth, Rita Wolf, and Souad Faress. (3/10/86) (Embassy 72nd St.)

My Man Godfrey (1936)—In this entertaining screwball comedy about the Depression, Carole Lombard is a rich, gorgeous nit who goes to the city dump to find a "forgotten man." The man she finds—a suave, bitter victim of the economic collapse—is played by William Powell. The movie starts out with a promising satiric idea and winds up in box-office romance, but it's likable and well paced even at its silliest. Lombard shrieks happily, and Powell modulates impeccably. With Mischa Auer, Alice Brady, and Franklin Pangborn. Directed by Gregory La Cava, from a screenplay by Eric Hatch and Morrie Ryskind. (Thalia SoHo; June 3.)

The Night of the Hunter (1955)—Despite its peculiar overtones of humor, this is one of the most frightening movies ever made (and truly frightening movies become classics of a kind). Robert Mitchum is the murderous, sex-obsessed, hymn-singing soul-saver with hypnotic powers, and his terrified new wife (Shelley Winters), who has a boy and a little girl from an earlier marriage, becomes his fervent disciple. He is something of a Pied Piper in reverse; adults trust him, children try to escape. The two kids' flight from the madman is a mysterious, dreamlike episode—a deliberately "artistic" suspense fantasy, broken by the appearance of a Christian variety of fairy godmother (Lillian Gish). This shadowy horror fable was the first and only movie directed by Charles Laughton. With Evelyn Varden, James Gleason, Don Beddoe, and Peter Graves. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 4.)

Pépé le Moko (1937)—Superb entertainment. A classic romantic tragedy of the thirties, and one of the most compelling of all fatalistic French screen romances, yet seen by few Americans because it was remade in Hollywood two years later as "Algiers," starring Charles Boyer and "introducing" Hedy Lamarr. "Algiers" was so closely copied from "Pépé le Moko" that look-alikes were cast in many of the roles, and some sequences were followed shot by shot, but "Algiers" is glamorous pop that doesn't compare to the original, directed by Julien Duvivier and starring Jean Gabin as the gangster who finds love but can't find his freedom. No one who saw "Pépé" is likely to forget the scene in which the homesick-for-Paris Gabin looks at a Métro ticket and recites the names of the stations. With Mireille Balin, Marcel Dalio, and Gaston Modot. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 5.)

Ragtime (1981)—The movie doesn't have an impudent slapstick vision, isn't a pop epic, or even a satiric fling. It's limp—it always seems to be aiming about halfway toward the effects that E. L. Doctorow achieved in his literary extravaganza. Is it possible that the director, Miloš Forman, thought that if he didn't go for razzle-dazzle what was left would be "truth"? If so, he started from the wrong book. He has made a seriously intended eccentric movie about a black piano player (Howard E. Rollins, Jr.) who demands redress for an insult. When the piano player can't find a legal remedy, he becomes a bomb-planting terrorist. The narrative shifts are jerky; the film seems chewed up rather than edited. With James Cagney, Pat O'Brien, Donald O'Connor, Norman Mailer, Elizabeth McGovern, Mary Steenburgen, and Mandy Patinkin. (Thalia; June 4.)

Ran—Set in the sixteenth century, Kurosawa's epic spectacle, a variation on the theme of "King Lear," is static, but it deepens, and it has its own ornery splendor. For the first forty minutes or so, the picture is all preparation, and it seems dead, but then the preparation begins to pay off, and by the end the fastidiousness and the monumental scale of what Kurosawa has undertaken can flood you with admiration. With Mieko Harada, Tatsuya Nakadai, the Japanese transvestite pop star known as Peter, and Hisashi Ikawa. In Japanese. (Two hours and forty-one minutes.) (1/13/86) (Cinema Studio.)

A Room with a View—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham-Carter) who desires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day Lewis). Bonham-Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. With Denholm Elliott, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach. The movie is more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. It was directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. (3/24/86) (Paris.)

Sweet Liberty—With Alan Alda, Michael Caine, and Michelle Pfeiffer; directed by Alda. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews Tower East, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews State.)

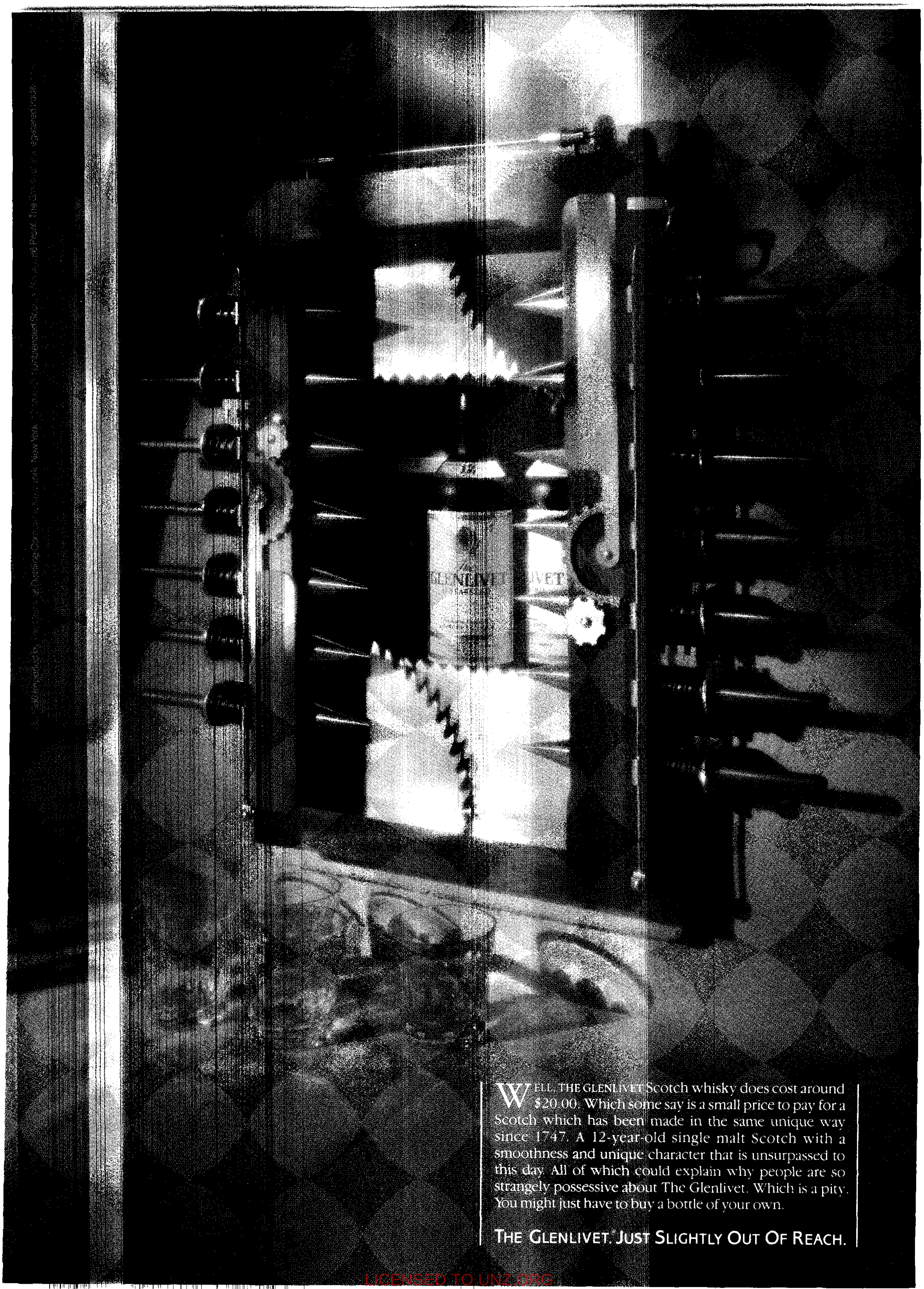
The Trip to Bountiful—Geraldine Page gives a controlled, all-out performance as Carrie Watts, an old-age pensioner who wears seat-sprung housedresses and lives in a tiny apartment in Houston with her sad, defeated son and his shrill wife, who keeps picking on her. The movie—a weeper—is about Carrie's longing to escape and return to Bountiful, the Gulf Coast town where she grew up; she runs away, gets on a bus headed in the right direction, and lives out her dream. Directed by Peter Masterson, from Horton Foote's adaptation of his 1953 teleplay, it's a "spiritual" picture—a tribute to the decency of the common people who endure by doing the best they can. The camera is meant to be the mirror of Carrie's soul, but we look in that mirror for so long that finally all we see is Geraldine Page acting. The movie is intended to be a hymn, but all Foote and Masterson can do is give some of the characters a limp, anesthetized grace. With John Heard, Carlin Glynn, Rebecca DeMornay, and Richard Bradford. (1/13/86) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Turtle Diary—Glenda Jackson and Ben Kingsley play the two Londoners who separately develop the fantasy of liberating the three giant turtles from the Aquarium at the London Zoo and taking them back to the sea. John Irvin directed this low-key, fastidious version of the 1975 Russell Hoban novel, from a script by Harold Pinter. Jackson and Kingsley manage to give the middle of the movie—the weekend drive to the coast with the turtles—a balmy comic spirit of adventure. But the story has been given the same maudlin orchestration as in the novel; it's full of sad and lonely people reaching out. The awful artfulness of this stuff! With Michael Gambon, Jeroen Krabbé, and Harriet Walter. (3/24/86) (Olympia Quad; through May 29.)

Vagabond—Agnès Varda wrote and directed this scrupulously hardheaded film about an eighteen-year-old girl on the road, a deliberately homeless drifter who lives on handouts, thefts, a little prostitution, and the occasional odd job. At the opening, her frozen body is discovered in a ditch in the countryside near the city of Nîmes. Varda presents the movie as a documentary investigating how this happened. The characters are the sullen, suspicious, vacant-eyed young girl (played immaculately by Sandrine Bonnaire) and the witnesses to her last weeks. The purity and boldness of Varda's approach may call Robert Bresson to mind, and it's perfectly evident why this film won the Golden Lion at the 1985 Venice Film Festival; it's the work of a visual artist. But we see the closed-off girl strictly from the outside, and this factual, objective view isn't enough. Varda's flat-out approach excludes the uses of the imagination—both hers and ours. With Macha Méril. In French. (5/19/86) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Violets Are Blue—A slim, undeveloped movie in which Sissy Spacek, as a globe-trotting photojournalist, is a vaporous figure standing in for all the women who got into what they once thought were the glamorous occupations and find themselves shading thirty-five or forty and alone. Can this modern woman go back to her home town (Ocean City, Maryland) and retrieve the man she left behind? That is, can she have everything—the excitement of her work and the solidity represented by Kevin Kline as the editor of the local paper? And does this man really want to ditch his responsibilities—which include a wife (Bonnie Bedelia) and a son (Jim Standiford)—and become a risk-taker? All the director, Jack Fisk, can accomplish is to keep the movie lightweight and pretty. (5/5/86) (Coronet. . . . ¶ U. A. Twin; through May 29.)

Wise Guys—Danny DeVito, as the bumptious Italian Harry, and Joe Piscopo, as the Jewish simpleton Moe, are the two clownish underdogs who come out on top in this Mafia burlesque—a broad, slapstick farce, set in Newark and spattered with boyish gross-out humor. The directing, by Brian De Palma, is canny and smooth, but this musty genre calls for fresh jokes and sharp, colorful personalities, and that's not what he's working with. The frankness of the picture's grubby anti-glamour is its only claim to charm. Maybe you'd have to be part of what is delicately referred to as the undemanding audience—say, somebody who watches every rerun of the Abbott and Costello pictures—to succumb and find the antics and the mugging as uproarious as they're meant to be. The script is credited to George Gallo. With Dan Hedaya, Captain Lou Albano, and, in brief appearances, Harvey Keitel, Ray Sharkey, Patti LuPone, Julie Bovasso, and Anthony Holland. The cinematography is by Fred Schuler. (5/19/86) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Festival; through May 29.)



WELL, THE GLENLIVET Scotch whisky does cost around $20.00. Which some say is a small price to pay for a Scotch which has been made in the same unique way since 1747. A 12-year-old single malt Scotch with a smoothness and unique character that is unsurpassed to this day. All of which could explain why people are so strangely possessive about The Glenlivet. Which is a pity. You might just have to buy a bottle of your own.

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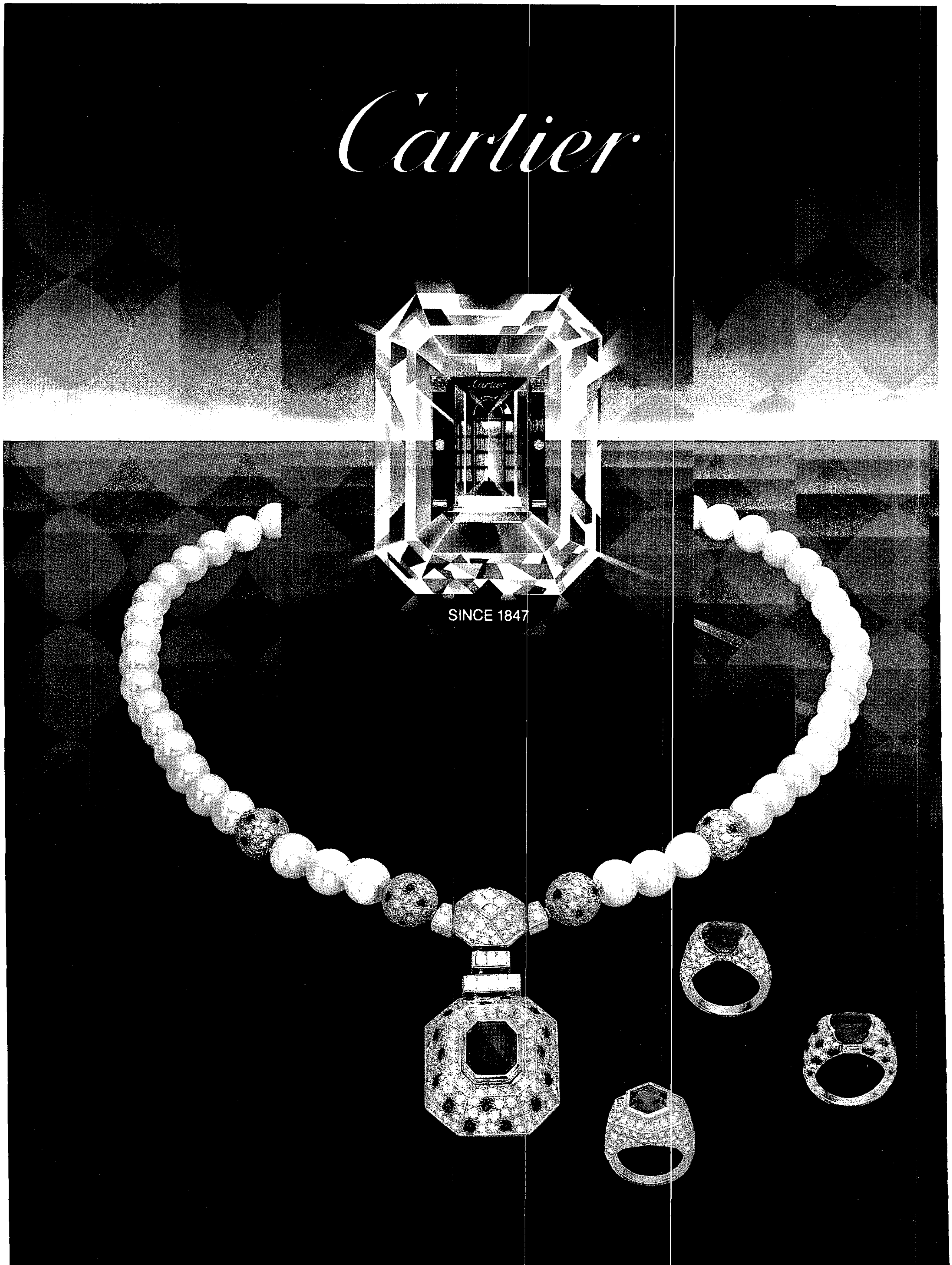
Cartier
Cartier
SINCE 1847

AUSTIN • BAL HARBOUR • BEVERLY HILLS • CHEVY CHASE • CHICAGO • COSTA MESA • DALLAS • FORT LAUDERDALE • HONOLULU • HOUSTON • LAS VEGAS
LOS ANGELES • NEW YORK • PALM BEACH • PALM SPRINGS • SAN FRANCISCO • SAN JUAN • ST THOMAS • TORONTO • VAIL • VANCOUVER • WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

EVERY year at this time, the mail brings a report prepared by an anthropologist, Anna Lou Dehavenon, for the East Harlem Interfaith Welfare Committee. The cover of the report always bears an appropriate Biblical quotation (this year's is from Jeremiah 6: "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace"), and inside is an analysis of the people who sought emergency groceries that year from ten religious agencies in the poorest areas of Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. Among households in the report which were cut off from welfare benefits last year—often because of errors by the city's Human Resources Administration—more than ten per cent did some stealing in order to buy food. Of one thousand one hundred and seventy-five people who were asked about their last meal before seeking help, 51.2 per cent—most of them women with children—reported eating some animal protein, down from fifty-six per cent the year before. Of one thousand two hundred and seventy-eight people who were asked what they had consumed on the day they came for help, two hundred and eight had had only water, and four hundred and forty-five had had only some other liquid—the largest number of them coffee. Two hundred and thirty-eight had had no solid or liquid food since the day before. The report serves as yet another reminder that things are *still* bad in Harlem and in Bed-Stuy and in the South Bronx.

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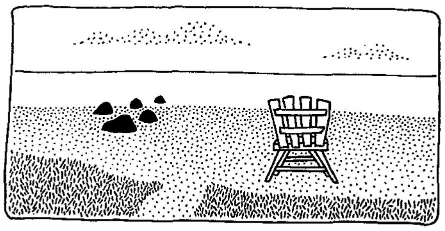
DIFFICULT though it is to remember, there was a time when people thought that pesticides were magic, a penicillin for produce; that black people naturally were second-class citizens and that women naturally belonged in the home; that a rapidly growing population was a sign of the world's vigor; that nuclear power plants offered free, sparkling-clean power. This state of grace prevailed not more than thirty years ago. And then came a period of warnings—the prophetic period. Walk into a used-book store and count the paperbacks published between, say, 1962 and 1978 which cry out about pollution, overpopulation, extinction of species, the hazards of certain foods and other consumer products, the nuclear peril, civil rights, the energy shortage.

In the early seventies, a full tank of gas cost a driver very little: five or six dollars. We drove where we wanted (which was everywhere), in what we wanted (which was fat cruise liners of automobiles). And then came the OPEC oil embargo, and the gas lines, and the terrible day when the dollars meter finally outraced the gallons meter on the pump. It was common knowledge that we would soon run out of petroleum, that our "love affair with the automobile" would have to be broken off, that we depended too heavily on foreign oil—that the squeeze was on. And so we conserved. We did better than anyone expected: cars became *tiny*, and soon tiny cars looked normal; folks drove to work with other folks, surrendering absolute control of the radio dial; people even climbed out from behind the wheel to pump their own gas. There was some talk of a new ethic—a responsible, unselfish, looking-ahead ethic. But was it a new ethic, or was it a temporary response—the market at work? In either case, it was dramatic and useful, but the answer to the question counts. At the moment, gas costs very little again. The papers run pictures of filling stations staging price wars. We drove past one not long ago that was offering free maps; eight dollars of Texaco got you a free hamburger at Roy Rogers last month. People seem to have forgotten the scare. The Nebraska Legislature recently passed a seventy-mile-per-hour speed limit (though the governor vetoed it). Dealers report that big-car sales are soaring. And yet the papers have not been full of stories about how we don't have to worry anymore. We are still going to run out of oil—the crunch, experts say, may be postponed for some years by the effective functioning of the market, but there is only so much oil there, and it will get expensive again.



Are there warnings that we have heeded even less? Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" triggered the eruption of prophetic books, and eventually DDT was banned inside our borders, but in 1984 farmers applied one billion eighty million tons of other pesticides—exactly twice the 1964 total—and many of them have been inadequately tested, and are ecologically troubling. In the seventies, there seemed to be indications that we had learned some of the dangers of military intervention abroad—that innocent people would be killed, that force was a blunt object and its effects were hard to calibrate or control, that we were not forever and automatically in the right. A lot of people pointed out that nuclear power plants carried the potential for catastrophe, and the building of them did slow down, but over a hundred are in operation in this country, and more are to go on line soon. (This sort of compromise may not be as reasonable as it seems—it may, perhaps, be unreasonable. Solomon announced that he would cut the baby in half, but that was only a ruse by which to figure out which "radical," or "extreme," solution was the right one.) The dangers that nuclear power plants present (and the dangers of pesticides, and rain-forest clear-cutting, and species extinction, and—if you ask the tobacco companies—cigarette smoking) are largely speculative. Or, at least, they were until Chernobyl. But we are assured that the dangers of *American* nuclear power plants are largely speculative. Come talk to us, say the experts, when Pittsburgh glows.

It is equally interesting to see which points seem to have sunk in. The civil-rights movement and the feminists won, and have retained, several broad victories, in part because their causes are so obviously right, and in part because these campaigns are made up of actual people, who can yell when they are pinched. These are not the sort of problems that creep silently up the food chain. We have been wary of military actions that might cost lots of American lives; perhaps we learned that foreign wars were likely to be "quagmires" without developing any new ethic about them—just as we bought Toyotas during the gas scare while we pined for the Buick Electra with cruise control but didn't want to pay for the gas. Still, charging down the highway will never carry quite the same, innocent joy—it's more defiant, a little sour. The nineteen-eighties may resemble the nineteen-fifties, but they can't *be* the nineteen-fifties, because the nineteen-sixties and the nineteen-seventies took place in between. It says on the side of the package that the cigarettes in there can kill you, so how can it be the same to smoke them?

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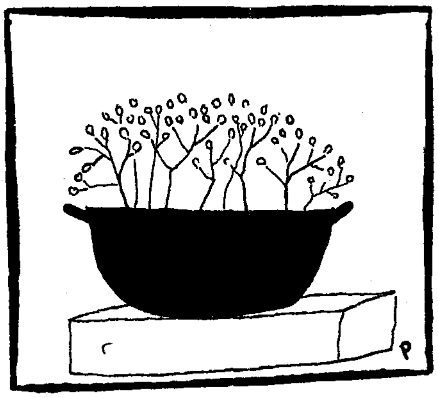
A FRIEND of ours, an American living in Rome, writes:

Last Saturday, as my husband and I walked down Via Cavour at the tail end of an anti-nuclear march—the largest ever held in Rome, some hundred thousand strong—from Piazza dell'Esedra to Piazza Navona, we saw a tumultuous crowd of about twenty-five people gathered outside a store whose sign advertised minerals and semiprecious stones. It appeared to be some demonstrators who had momentarily left the march—excited young men carrying signs protesting the Chernobyl nuclear accident, who now seemed in the grip of a confused passion. The shopkeeper, a slight, middle-aged Roman with a discreet but decided expression on his face, stood barring their entrance. When my husband went up to someone on the edge of the crowd, a tall young man with a neat haircut and a handsome, suntanned face, and asked, in Italian, what was going on, the young man hesitated, then said, "It's some American soldiers. They're beating them up."

A second later, when he realized that we were Italian-speaking Americans, he looked embarrassed. "*Mi dispiace*—I'm sorry," he said in a polite voice, and walked off down the street. At the same time, the rest of the crowd seemed to dissolve as its members headed off to rejoin the march, which had vanished in the direction of the Colosseum. My husband and I were left facing the shopkeeper, who unbarred his arms from the door and let emerge from inside five young American men who turned out to be sailors in civilian dress. According to them, to the keeper of the mineral shop, and to a white-haired old man who told us, in Roman dialect, that he had seen the whole thing, the group of sailors had been walking down Via Cavour as sightseers, and had been set upon by marchers, though they had done nothing to provoke the attack. Very much outnumbered, they had been shoved, hit, and kicked, and had evidently been in real peril until the shopkeeper gave them refuge. "Please tell them," said the shopkeeper to my husband, "that they were in danger of being lynched." (The Italian verb, taken from English, is *linciare*.) He said it with a wry, resigned look and a hand-spreading gesture that suggested that he had seen overmuch of human nature and preferred contemplating minerals.

The sailors stood on the sidewalk, looking by turns angry and dazed. It was a beautiful, golden Roman afternoon, the kind that draws people out onto beaches, into the parks and squares, and the young men were dressed up for shore leave in open-necked shirts and modish denims. The things that revealed that they were American military men were their size, their muscles, their short hair, and the fact that one of them was black. Their faces were round and young: they all looked about eighteen years old. They told us that they were from a ship out of San Diego that had been stationed in the Indian Ocean and recently transferred to the Mediterranean, where it had been on duty off the coast of Libya, and that, ironically, they were escorting a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier—though their attackers could not possibly have known that. Their ship had docked down the coast, at Gaeta, and they had come to see Rome.



"Why did they want to hit on us?" asked the shortest and most talkative of the sailors. "This nuclear-cloud thing is the Russians' fault." He seemed to be flooded with adrenaline, alternately thanking the shopkeeper and saying to his comrades, with a rueful pugnacity, things like "Well, they got us. Forty to one, they couldn't miss."

The other young men seemed more bewildered. "I can't believe it," said one. "They yelled at us 'Yankee go home!' We're not Yankees. I'm from South Carolina. My buddy here is from Alabama."

"Over here, 'Yankee' just means American," my husband told him.

"I never heard it used that way," he said.

The black sailor, clearly too young to have lived through any of the civil-rights movement, rubbed his hand over his forehead. "I can't believe it!" he said. "To have somebody attack you, to get beaten up just because of what you *are!*"

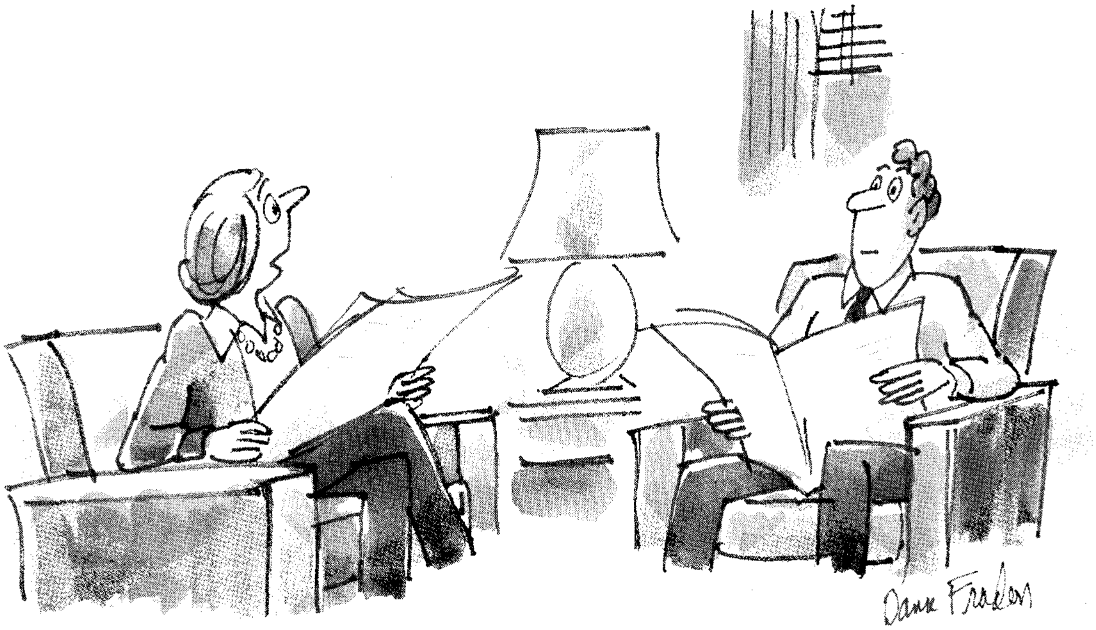
"I got kicked, and punched in the chest," said the tallest of the sailors, who looked very pale.

I asked him if he was all right.

"Physically, I'm O.K.," he said. "Mentally, I'm injured. Right now, I feel like crying."

The shopkeeper, who had been accepting their thanks with the same wry, resigned look on his face, said to us, "I am Italian, and proud of it, but this makes me ashamed. It is terrible that Italians could do this. I myself am against nuclear power, but some of those troublemakers who are marching there are interested only in violence—their own disgusting internal politics."

The next day, in fact, the newspapers told us that the end of the column of protest marchers had included a



"Under the new tax plan, do we get it in the neck more or less than under the old tax plan?"

number of anarchists and extremist splinter groups, who might have been inclined to make use of the demonstration for their own ends; several of the young men near the shop had been holding signs proclaiming them to be members of the leftist group Democrazia Proletaria. However, after the sailors, still shaken, had walked away, and the shopkeeper had gone back to his minerals, it occurred to me that the deeper meaning of the incident was not the hurly-burly of Italian radical politics but the pervasive sense of bafflement and helplessness that almost everyone living in Europe experiences these days. The feeling, after the American bombing of Tripoli and the Chernobyl incident, is that ordinary daily life is being manipulated by irrational forces beyond comprehension. Here in Rome, as foreigners and Italians alike accept into their consciousness the possibility of being the victims of random violence in a terrorist attack, and as they adapt to the official announcement that for two weeks, because of possible radiation contamination, they cannot give milk or green vegetables to their children, there is a slight but general sense of inchoate, frustrated anger. It is a low-grade emotion that doesn't normally interfere with practical life but among Italians usually manifests itself in a continuous muffled hum of anti-Soviet and anti-American sentiments. Sometimes, in a brief flare-up, it inspires attacks on odd, even ludicrous, targets. For example, there is a billboard, sponsored by the neo-Fascist group Fronte della Gioventù, protesting "Yuppies," "Fast Food," and "L'idiozia dell' American Way of Life." Also in the fast-food vein, there is the continuing outcry surrounding the opening of the first McDonald's in Rome, in which crusaders for the purity of Italian cuisine neglect to remember that the capital city already holds several prefab burger places. McDonald's is being attacked, of course, as an icon of American culture, just as the sailors were attacked for being American military men in Rome.

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When my husband and I caught up with the anti-nuclear demonstration, down near the Forum, it had started to break up. Small groups had already dropped out, and people stood talking, some holding yellow banners that said "Stop al Nucleare," or smaller posters with inscriptions like "Contaminati di Tutto il Mondo, Unitevi"—"Contaminated Ones of the Earth, Unite." The march had been an extraordinary conglomeration of different types of people: students; young middle-class families with children; punks with stiff green Mohawks; a band of bikers with fifties-style pompadours and big Moto Guzzi motorcycles. Now, as a smiling pregnant woman with an anti-nuclear poster posed for her husband's snapshots in the clear afternoon sunlight, there was a sense that the common aspiration that had prompted the march had been replaced by individual concerns. It was hard to imagine that all the disparate groups had been connected in one long line, just as it had been hard to imagine, once they had gone, that some pleasant-looking young men from that line had coalesced into the violent crowd in front of the mineral store. In such instances, I thought, things go through such a fast metamorphosis that the process is impossible to understand. Yet in that process—the momentary dissolving of an individual into a group, the line leading from the rational to the irrational—lies the secret of those sparks which ignite battles and lynch mobs, and whose bright, distorting light may lead men, momentarily, to see other men only as targets.

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Active Mud

IN a hopeful mood, we want, we wait for, certain refreshing developments: shirts rolled up to the elbow, for instance; not the stupid glamour of too carefully darkened skin (an import) but more than one color on a forearm—this is spring. Well, "*body-conscious fashions*" could be all right. These could be found at Macy's, we were told. And how about "*active mud*" as a sign of spring? This was also at Macy's when we went there. Just smooth it on all over, or look at it. *Active mud*, we can report, feels slithery.

Walking into a department store is not the easy experience it once was. Sometimes we try to keep our eyes on the floor. The floor has not usually been renovated. It has the familiar cracks and shows signs of wear. Elsewhere, all signs of erosion, or wearing down by time, have been scraped away. Dozens of young people in evening clothes (they dress early for dinner; they have been up all night—it is impossible to tell) try to find ways to give away perfume. And, of course, there is so much to learn. Never has there been a better time to learn in a department store. Five years ago, it was a learning experience; now it is a university. We walked into Macy's; we picked up a small booklet; we saw three young women dressed in white; we looked at three video monitors. The young women were wearing white dresses with very long waists (not very *body-conscious*, in our view), and each had a half-muddy face. A small voice from within the video monitors said, "Active mud . . . Terme di Montecatini . . . just smooth it on all over . . . your skin emerges looking revitalized . . . active mud . . . spa . . . for over twenty-four hundred years . . . the accumulation of centuries . . . clear youthful radiance . . . twenty-four hundred years . . . accumulation of centuries of potent active minerals . . . constant fresh thermal waters . . . placed in an incubation bath . . . kept in a precise degree of temperature and moisture . . . from an ancient quarry . . . two years kept in a pool . . . every inch of you." The booklet said, "Terme di Montecatini Skincare—Contemporary beauty therapy since 400 B.C."

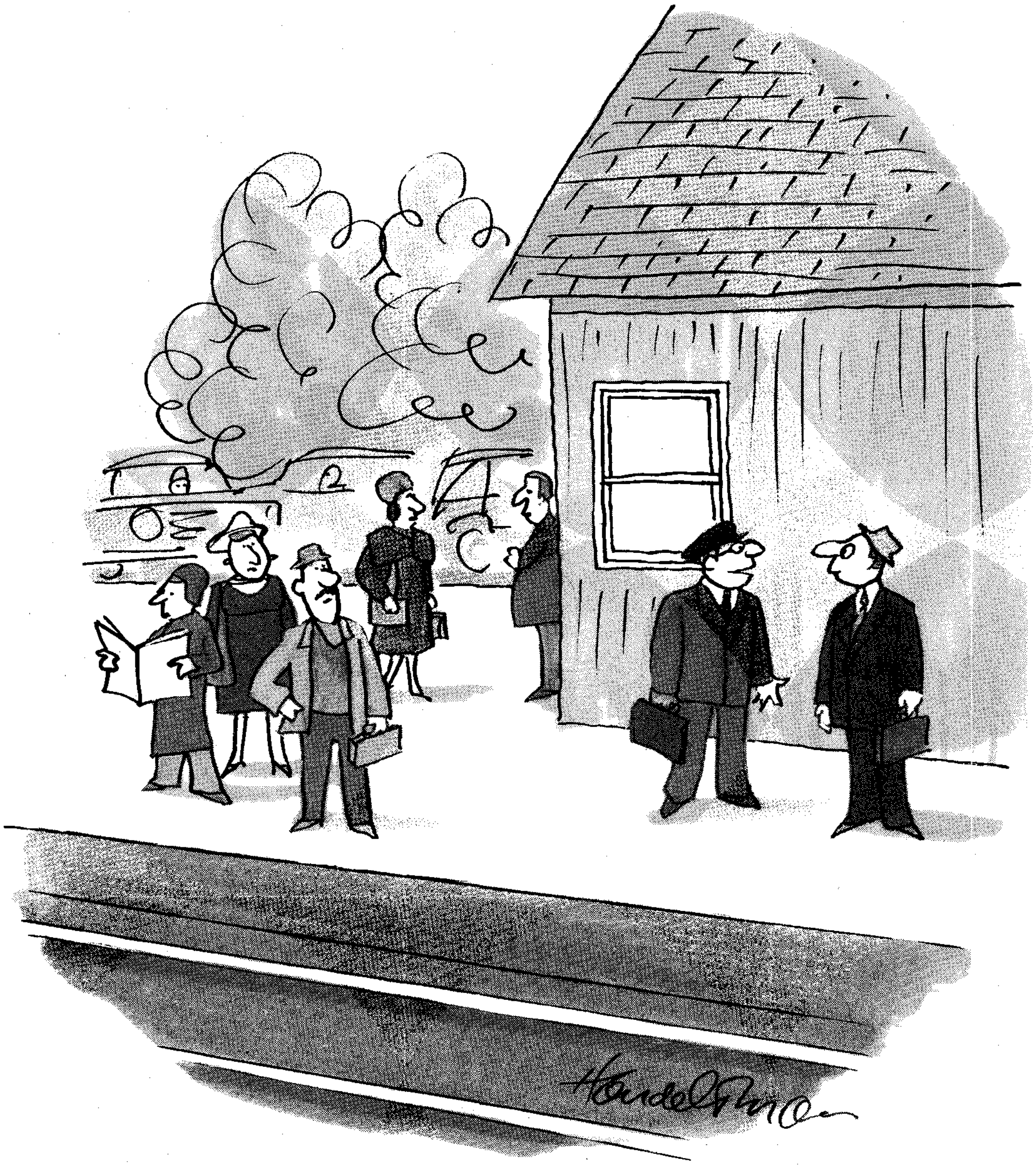
Just this much is almost too much to get straight—*ever*. But there is more. We went to see *body-conscious fashions*. The precise promise was that there would be the Princess Marcella Borghese "Sensuale" Ready-to-Wear show of body-conscious fashions. It turns out that "Sensuale" is not a description of certain fashions but a *kind of lipstick*. The Sorbonne is this confusing at first: ancient faculties, with splendid ancient names, but some of them don't hold classes at all, or the degree is worthless; you can't get a job with it—nothing. People just laugh. And the *competition*. All around the Borghese Principality on the main floor of Macy's were hovering, just over the border, a dozen young men in dinner clothes, *enticing*, *enticing*. "We have a lovely free gift with Calvin Klein's 'Obsession' today," they said.

We watched the Borghese show of body-conscious fashions. They weren't nearly body-conscious enough, in our opinion. We had in mind the feeling of a straitjacket being ripped to shreds by winter-weary men and women, exposing legs, arms, breasts. It was not available. Models entered down a staircase; this was one of the old staircases, solid, built to take traffic. At the head of the staircase was the Metropolitan Museum of Art—another ancient faculty. Or perhaps it was the Metropolitan Museum of Art Gift Shop. But why the museum would allow the gift shop to go out on its own is anyone's guess. Standing at the foot of the stairs, one looked up and saw words and word fragments:

OLITAN MUSEUM OF AR

The rest was cut off from view by glass walls framing the stairs. Models came into view under the word fragment "OLITAN."

Some of the models carried masks that had been bisected by active mud. This was the tie-in. The young women were wearing body-conscious clothing; they carried masks to which had been applied a bit of active mud. They were, presumably, wearing Princess Marcella Borghese "Sensuale" lipstick. The accent was, finally, on skin care. We have been looking for the right word to describe the system, the ballpark, the specific *world* within which the Princess Marcella Borghese Terme di Montecatini Skincare ——— (here we lack the word) can be said to exist. We favor *government*. We think that what we have here is the Princess M. B.

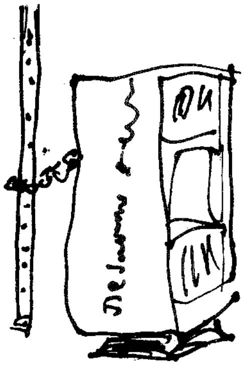


"Doris and I both know where the bodies are buried. That's what keeps us together."

Terme di Montecatini Skincare Government. Unicameral legislature, with near-dictatorial powers; window-dressing Chamber of Notables; and beautiful, *beautiful* skin. Everywhere. On policemen; in the infantry; throughout hundreds of thousands of acres of tract housing. For centuries, for millennia, really, royalty and aristocracy and a few others (attendants, guests, gate-crashers, nouveaux riches, divorcées, the desperate and the deeply ashamed, to name just a few) have used the thermal mineral waters of the Tuscan countryside as a prop against their ruin. Now we in America have a chance to participate in this process.

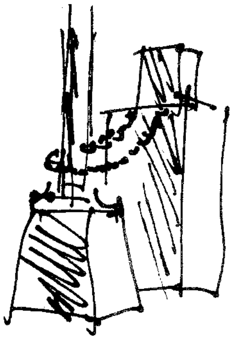
Security

On strolls through midtown, we've noticed that security is getting tighter all the time. It used to be that people chained their bicycles—now everything is chained. Walking along Fortieth Street one morning, we observed a *Journal of Commerce* vending box attached to a parking sign near Third Avenue (*Illus. A*).



Illus. A.

Walking on, we saw a *Times* box bound to a street light on Lexington (*Illus. B*), and then *Crain's New York Business* chained to a light near Park (*Illus. C*).



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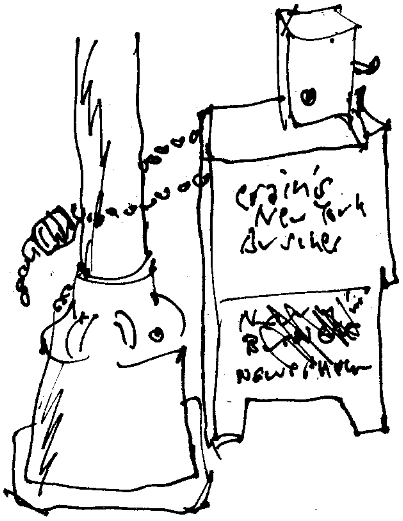
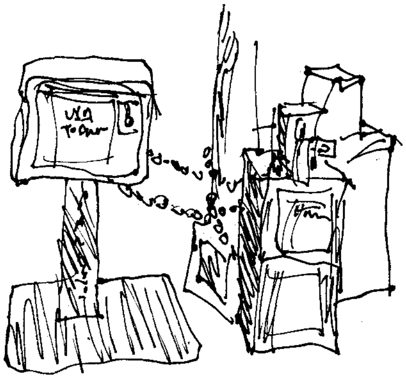


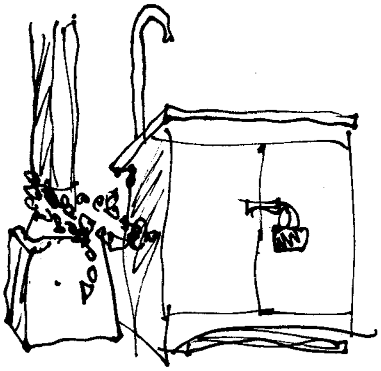
Illus. C.

On the southeast corner of Forty-second and Lexington, three papers—*USA Today*, *Investor's Daily*, and the *Financial Times*—huddled together for safety, their chains overlapping (*Illus. D*).



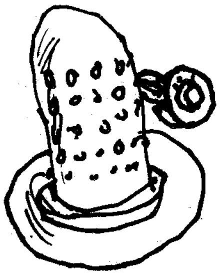
Illus. D.

Not far away, an anonymous gray box, its own doors padlocked, was held to a street light by festoons of links (*Illus. E*).



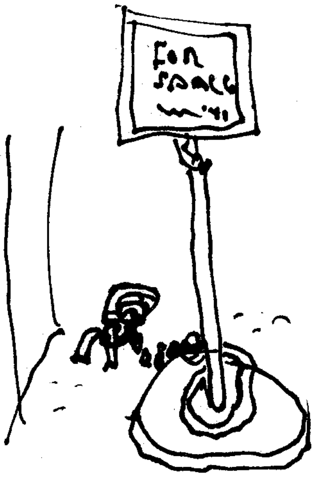
Illus. E.

A highly polished cylindrical vent in front of Howard Johnson's, on Forty-second Street between Park and Lexington, featured a large padlock (*Illus. F*)—a symbolic warning to cylindrical-vent thieves, no doubt—and a real-estate sign in front of a building a few blocks to the west, near Fifth Avenue, was chained and padlocked to a metal ring embedded in the sidewalk (*Illus. G*).



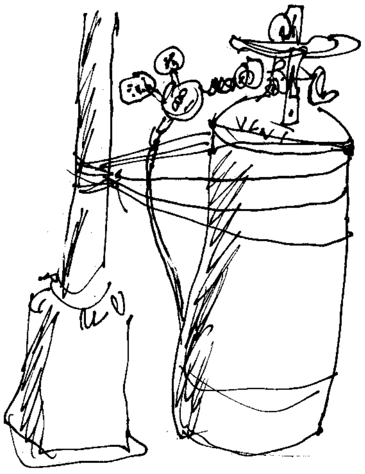
Illus. F.

(It would be easier to swipe the building.)



Illus. G.

On the northeast corner of Forty-first Street and Third Avenue, a large gas tank (*Illus. H*) was secured to a street light by white string—probably a temporary measure, pending protection of a more substantial sort.



Illus. H.

PANTS ON FIRE

I CAN remember the day that my life as an adult began. I was four months into my first year as a businessman, so I had only five shirts. Each of them could be worn, at the very most, three times, except for the blue, which continued to look sharp well into the fourth wearing, as long as none of the previous wearings had been on unusually hot days. The cleaners would accept no fewer than three shirts at a time, and laundry took four days, so frequently there would be a single shirt hanging in my large, resonant closet when I came home from work.

On the morning of my adulthood, I had on my bureau an unopened brown paper parcel containing three clean shirts. I pried off the string (for it never paid to try to snap the string that early in the morning, or to fiddle with the excellent dry cleaner's knot) and let string and paper fall at my feet. When I was a boy, my mother had sometimes brought home paper parcels of thinly sliced Westphalian ham and allowed me to open them, and this first moment of shirt disclosure had something of the Westphalian experience, yet was perhaps even more pleasing because in this case I was rediscovering my old buddies—articles of clothing I'd worn and worn, now in a condition of almost unrecognizable freshness. The familiar puffy wrinkles inside the elbows and around the waist, where I had tucked and retucked the tails, were replaced by new, good kinds of semi-intentional knife-edge wrinkles here and there that only heightened the impression of ironedness, having come about either from the indiscriminate force of pressing machines (those crow's-feet on the sleeve near the cuffs) or as part of the final folding. And the shirts weren't merely folded: strips of light-blue paper held them tightly and individually to their stored state, with their arms impossibly bent behind them as if concealing a present.

I looked at the three of them—two whites and the long-running blue—and I decided I would wear my slightly older (four months old) white. Four months a businessman! When I looked closely, I was sure I could detect a slight aging of the cotton—it seemed to be taking the starch more crisply than the newer white shirt could. I snapped the blue paper strip and pulled out the shirt cardboard just as you used to pull the old kind of Polaroid film from the camera through rollers that squeezed a cool, chemical jelly over the face-down snapshot, which you saw only after the anxious ten count. The cardboard went on top of the stack of cardboards (quite a stack). I saved them partly because I had always liked drawing on the shirt cardboards saved from my father's shirts. Also, a shirt cardboard, curved into a trough, makes a nice receptacle to hold under your chin while you trim your beard—something I had been doing more frequently since starting the job. Now I held the freed shirt in the air with a little finger hooked under the collar and shook it once. It made the sound of a flag flying outside the consulate of a small, rich country. Now—was I ready to put it on?

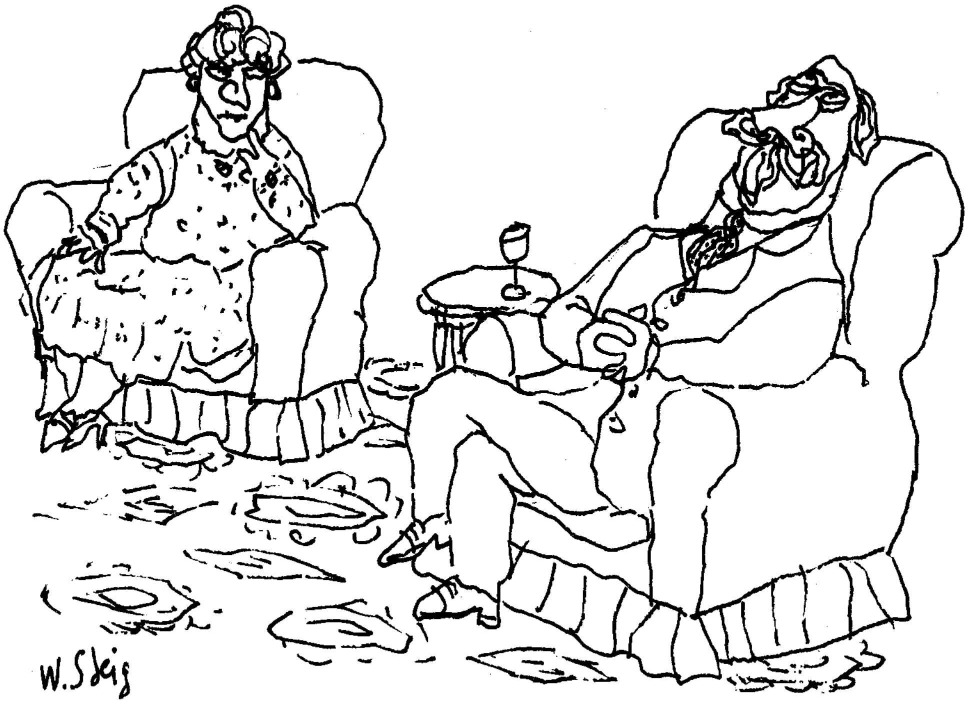
My T-shirt, of course, was already tucked in my shorts; a few weeks into the job I had discovered that this small act of foresight made the rest of the business day much more comfortable. And my pants were on but not fastened. I *was* ready. The shirt was always colder than expected. I started work at the second button from the top, braving the minor pain in my thumb tip as I pushed that button through and heard the minuscule creaking or winching sound that its edge made in clearing the densely stitched perimeter. From there I progressed right down the central strip of buttons, did up my pants, and moved on to the cuffs. These two buttons were naturally the hardest, because you could use only one hand and the starch was always heaviest in that region, but I had gotten to a point where I could fasten them almost without thinking. You upend the right cuff button with your thumbnail and crack the starch-fused buttonhole apart over it and close your fingers hypodermically to propel it into place; then you repeat the procedure with the other cuff. Speeded up, the two symmetrical cuff-buttoning sequences would look like a Highland reel.

The top button called me to the mirror, where I saw my chin jut up into a bulldog expression to make way for the fists at my neck. Then the tie, the belt, the shoes—all automatic subroutines.

I had my coat on when I remembered that I'd forgotten to put on antiperspirant. This was a setback. I contemplated undoing the belt, untucking the shirt, untucking the T-shirt from the shorts. Was it worth it? I was running late.

Here was where I made a discovery. An image came to me—Ingres's portrait of Napoleon. Displacing my tie, I undid a single middle button. Yes, it was quite possible to get at your underarm by entering the shirt through the gap made by one undone button and then working the stick of antiperspirant up the pleural cavity between T-shirt and shirt until you were able to snag the sleevelet of the T-shirt with a finger and pull it past the seam where your shirtsleeve began, thereby exposing the area you needed to reach. I felt like Balboa or Copernicus. In college I had been amazed to see women take off bras without removing their sweatshirts, by unfastening the rear bra-catch through the material, pushing one sleeve up far enough to slip off one strap, and, after a few arousing shrugs of their shoulders, pulling the whole wriggling thing nonchalantly out of the opposite sleeve. My own antiperspirant discovery had some of the topologically revelatory flavor of those bra removals.

I walked to the subway very pleased with myself. My business shoes (my one pair) made a nice granular sound on the sidewalk. The subway wasn't crowded, and I got a standing spot I liked and had room to bend to put my briefcase between my ankles. It was one of those good rides, where the motion of the train is soothing and the car temperature is pleasantly warm but not hot. The phrase "You can taste it with your eyes" came into my head; being mildly hungry, I ran with it. It was a shame that white bread had fallen into disfavor, I decided, since only white bread looks really good as toast, and only white bread looks good when cut diagonally. I remembered the strange steamy feeling of white toast at the moment you remove it from the toaster (no matter how crumby or disreputable the toaster is, the toast always comes out smooth and clean), and the many styles of buttering you can use. You can scrape lightly, keeping to the surface, or if you have cold butter you may be obliged to crush into the softer region below the crust as you force the butter to spread. You can tap little chips of butter onto the toast without spreading them at all, and then place the two pieces of toast face to face and cut them in half diagonally, so that the pressure of the knife helps the melting of the butter in addition to halving the bread. Now, why is diagonal cutting better than cutting straight across? Because the corner of a triangularly cut slice gives you an ideal first bite. With rectangularly cut toast, you have to angle the shape into your mouth, as if you were angling a big dresser through a hall doorway: you have to catch one corner of your mouth with one corner of the toast and then slightly and carefully *turn* the toast, drawing the mouth open with it so that the far corner of the toast can clear; only then do you chomp down. Also, with the diagonal slice, most of the tapered bite is situated right up near the front of your mouth, where you want it to be as you begin to chew. With the rectangular slice, a cumbersome fraction is riding out of control, high on the dome of the tongue. One subway stop before mine, I concluded that there had been a logic behind the progress away from the parallel and toward the diagonal cut of toast, and that this hypotenusal expedient is not, as it may first have appeared to be, merely an affectation of short-order cooks.



Private Thoughts

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I became curious about how late I was going to be. My watch had been stolen by threat of force a week before, but I glanced hopefully down the diminishing perspective of hands and wrists hanging from the metal loops of the subway car. I spotted many watches, women's and men's, but on this particular morning they were all unreadable. The buckle, and not the face, of one pointed my way; some were too far off; the women's were too small; several lacked all circumferential points of reference, and thus remained Necco wafers to all but their wearers; some were oriented so that the slightest gleam from their crystals obscured the hands or the diodes beneath. A wristwatch less than a foot from my head, worn by a too carefully shaven man reading a newspaper folded into tiny segments, was exactly half visible; the left, or up-arm, half was eclipsed by his cuff, so that while I could easily make out the terminal "-get" of the tall-lettered trademark, and even notice for the first time the microscopic vibration of the sweep hand following its tiny jolt to the next-adjoining second, all the timepiece could tell me was that it was not yet past nine o'clock. The cuff was possibly more expertly starched than my own.

And this was when I realized abruptly that, as of that minute (I am sorry I can't say exactly which minute), I had finished with whatever major growth I was going to have as a human being, and that I was now forever arrested at an intermediate stage of personal development. I did not move or flinch or make any outward sign. Actually, once the first horrible moment of raw surprise had passed, the sensation was exciting. I was set: I was the sort of person who said "actually" too much. I was the sort of person who thought about buttered toast on the subway—buttered *raisin* toast, if it came to that: the way the high, crisp scrape of the butter knife is muted by its passage over the heat-blimped form of a raisin, and the way, if you cut across a raisin, it will sometimes fall out, still intact though dented, as you lift the slice from the plate. I was the sort of person whose biggest discoveries were likely to be tricks to applying toiletries while fully dressed. I was a man, but not quite the magnitude of man I had hoped to be.

As the train slowed for my stop, I tried to stretch out the initial pain of this discovery for as long as I could, because I hadn't had too many such moments of truth in my life. Back at street level, I decided that I had undergone a trial sufficiently out of the ordinary to justify my taking the time, late or not, to get some breakfast to go, at the good coffee place. Once there, however, as I watched the woman behind the counter open a beautiful small white bag for my coffee and tissue-wrapped muffin with the same loose-wristed flip she would use if she were shaking down a thermometer, I felt a sudden impatience to get to the office. I hurried toward my building. I was looking forward to the morning show-and-tell period, when I would describe, leaning in various doorways or on modular dividers, how my personality had ground to an amazing halt, right on the subway, and had left me a brand-new adult. I shot my cuffs and pushed through the revolving door to work. —NICHOLSON BAKER

GOOD GOSSIP

EVERYONE was surprised when Dee Kilmartin first passed around the news that Susannah was going to marry Harry Tierney. The rhyme "marry Harry" became kind of a joke the spring before the wedding. If you got yourself into a hole telling a story—if no one laughed at the end, and you had to keep going—you could always work your way around somehow to an "I could always marry Harry" and gratifying hilarity.

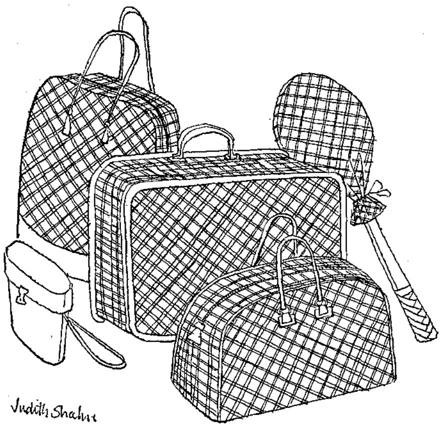
Not that Harry Tierney was laughable in himself. He was a fellow who tried awfully hard. He was a senior associate at a Wall Street law firm, and he worked, say, eighty hours a week. Doing what, no one knew, although he must have told Susannah. He was the sort of man who turned evil fast on a soap opera, because what audience could stand such unrelenting earnestness day after day? But despite his job he was just right to sit next to at dinner, which I did once. It was the only time I'd actually talked to him before the engagement. He had a way of wrinkling his brow while listening that was most flattering. He wasn't embarrassing (wasn't, you know, too much of a toady), the way we all imagined those people to be. Nor was he hideous, although his face was perhaps a trifle pudgy, and his body a bit, mmm, unformed.

It's just that Susannah had complained about him for at least a year before the announcement of their engagement. At one particularly drunken party downtown at Dee Kilmartin's, Susannah had fallen into my lap and cried, "He's so *bor*ing, he's so *bor*ing. Just *look* at him. Oh, God, *ev*erything is so *bor*ing." Unfortunately, she was close to being right, and not just about Harry Tierney. It was getting hard to sort out the parties: all the regulars just walked through their roles, and the guest stars were looking entirely too familiar. For me, turning thirty was too much like hitting the end of the season, when reruns began. Susannah tumbling on me was different enough that I didn't mind her crumpling my new secondhand skirt, although it meant an extra trip to the hateful dry cleaners on Broadway. Nor did I mind my thighs aching for days, although that could have been the result of walking with drunken assurance right into a table that night.

The biggest break in routine, however, was the impending marriage itself, which completely overshadowed any of Susannah's past theatrics. Our first theory—formed quite early, back in February, barely a week after the announcement—was that she was going to marry for money. Susannah may have had a harder time starting out than the rest of us. According to Dee, she first came to town to become an actress. Since I never heard of Susannah going to plays or otherwise showing an interest in drama, this plan must have expressed some vague need rather than true professional intent. Whichever, it didn't work out, and I don't know what she did for money then, or later, when she was back in school, studying design. She got free meals by hanging around certain hotel bars—or so she claimed. For a while, she lived out of a suitcase in the supply room of a health club. That much I know, because she took me over there one day. The suitcase was large and pale blue; her parents had given it to her for her high-school graduation. "Little did they imagine," she said as she snapped open the locks and pulled out a pink watch cap.

But that was a long time ago. Now, at a time when most people were quitting their jobs in a panic of boredom, she'd just landed a new one with a design firm, and she was making more money than most of us were. Besides which, she had a nice cheap sublet on East Tenth Street, so she didn't need Harry Tierney's high-rent floor-through in Chelsea.

Actually, we lit on the money theory because we found it thrilling. "Just like a Balzac novel," said Cole at the Horse Bar near Liz Quirk's, and Liz and Joey and I silently wondered at the sacrifice Susannah had made for so artistic an end. Even Liz, who had once fantasized about marriage to a famous basketball player, saying, "The only color I care about is green," was in awe of the reality.



Joey was the first to talk sense: "But didn't she just get a job?"

"That's true," I said. "Last time I saw her, she was talking about all the things she was going to get with her salary."

"She wouldn't marry for money now," said Joey. "Maybe in six months, when she's gotten used to those paychecks, and she's found out what she can't buy. . . ." So we got off on a tangent about how nowadays no one could live on money that at one time would have seemed astronomical, and we got so bored we soon found ourselves watching the color TV over the bar instead of talking.

I'd known these three people so long (Cole and Joey I met in college; Liz I met before my first year in New York was up), and each of us had seen the others in so many combinations that a certain blending had gone on, and I found it difficult to credit any of them with pasts or jobs very different from my own. As a result, many of our stories were as disembodied yet as familiar as plots of TV shows, so the transition from talking to watching was not an abrupt one.

Susannah I knew less well. I met her only a few years before, through Dee Kilmartin, who gives a lot of parties and so knows far too many people to know anyone in quite the way normal people do, and everyone at the Horse Bar that night knew Susannah through me. That's quite a distance, friend of a friend, even if everyone's been to the same parties. I didn't see her for several weeks after I first heard the news, but I occasionally saw someone who would refer archly to the "business deal" maturing in June, or someone who wouldn't let go of that "marry Harry" singsong. The whole thing had gotten a little silly by the time Cole and I met Susannah in the bar by the police station, and we'd decided we weren't going to talk about it.

She was late, and Cole and I had had time for a drink before she arrived, so we could make a good show of our congratulations when she walked in. Before responding, she took off her coat. It was a bit heavy for March, but worth any discomfort: long and cut wide, made of thick black karakul. She had to feel around for the buttonholes, and then it took a lot of careful tugging to free the buttons, which were large, with crescent indentations. "I can not bear to discuss it," she said finally, and as she sighed the voluminous coat fell over the back of the stool, nearly tipping it over. She sank into the folds, newly slender. "I have discussed it and discussed it, and if I have to discuss it again I will barf."

That's the way she talks. If you weren't as fond of her as I was, or if she hadn't quite so many parts comparable to poetic objects, you might say she had a vulgar streak. When she shook out her long black hair, the slow curls played off each other like plaster patterns in a bedroom ceiling. To think of all this ensnared by Harry Tierney—well, it was hard.

"I went to the butcher around the corner yesterday," she said, "and the most incredible lassitude overtook me as soon as I opened the door. I could barely move my legs, like in one of those terrible dreams. I just stood there while everyone else pushed forward to get their boring cuts of meat. I could have been in there an hour—I don't know, because my brain wasn't working, either. I couldn't stop thinking about all the times I've bought food, and all the times I was going to buy food. All those millions of pieces of meat and all those millions of pieces of bread and all those millions of pieces of lettuce. It's enough to make you sick."

"Then we'll have to drink our dinner," said Cole, but his face was glum. We all looked at the table next to ours, where hideous laughter was swelling.

I said, "We're not really going to have such a terrifically good time tonight, are we?"

So once again we broke up early. Susannah headed uptown, and Cole and I were left on a corner beside an empty basketball court crisscrossed with shadows from the chain-link fence. "Depression stalks even the least likely of us," said Cole.

"It gets around."

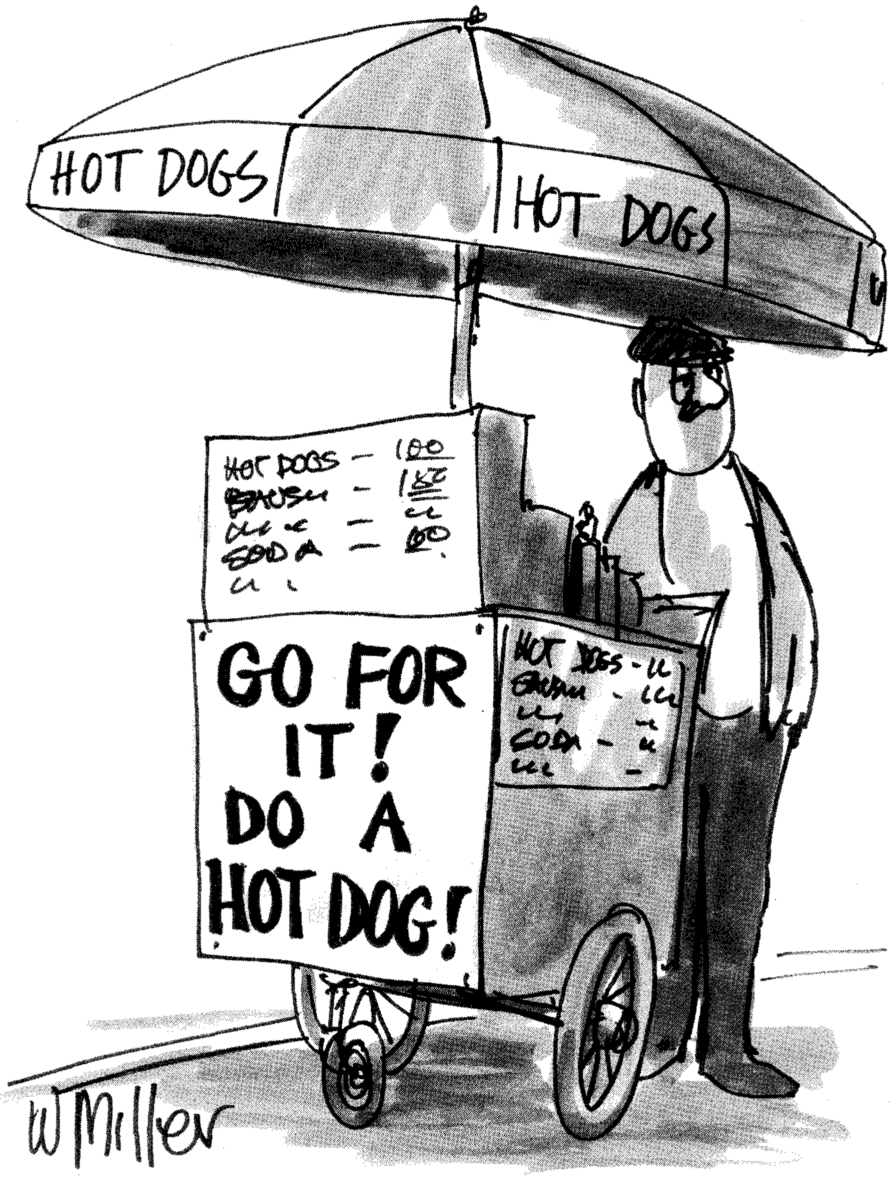
"Money does not seem to be on her mind."

"No."

"You don't think she's getting married out of boredom, do you?"

"Marry *Harry Tierney* out of boredom?"

"I suppose not."



THE inversion of flourish and line in left-handedness has always had a special charm for me. Left-handed Susannah turns the face of her watch onto the inside of her right wrist, for instance; telling the time requires only the subtlest falling back of the fingers instead of the unnatural lifting and crooking of the elbow other people go through. Yet to write the simplest grocery list she snakes her hand around three sides of a piece of paper.

Since she'd moved in, her sublet had acquired a similar, odd delicacy. Furniture lent to friends of the real tenant had never been replaced, powder puffs ballooned in corners, glasses were all shot size. In the kitchen, underneath the marble slab holding makeup in tomato cans, was a row of vodka bottles. Cole was lifting them one at a time and gauging their contents. Susannah, in a pink slip, picked a record off the stereo and ran it over her thigh to remove the dust. She was begging news about people who would be at that night's party: "I've been so out of it, I don't know what's going on, and you guys always know the good gossip."

Cole, busy pouring vodka, said, "Let me think . . ."

I thought of quite a good story about Dee Kilmartin, but then Susannah said, "I'll tell you what I've been doing. Meeting his family, for one thing."

"Harry's, you mean."

"It was absolutely exhausting. Harry is such a—well, a serious type, you know. . . ."

"So I hear. I've never talked to him," said Cole.

Susannah dismissed this with a twist of her hand. "It didn't prepare me for his family, but I should have known; he never said anything about them except how much fun they were, what a good time they have. The fact is, they're a laugh-track family. 'Hey, have a beer, chortle, chortle.' 'Don't mind if I do, chortle, chortle.' No matter what anyone said, everyone laughed. And one sister kept up a quiet ha-ha-ha, ha-ha-ha all the time, to sort of keep her motor running, the way you have to keep goosing an old car at a stoplight. They made Harry look so mercifully sane. I smiled so much I thought my face would crack. It was infuriating, but I had to be polite about it, so I started *agree*ing with them. I said, 'Yes, that is funny, isn't it?' or 'How amusing. Just as good as a dead-baby joke.' "

THE WEB

Which of my cities
am I doomed to die in?
Geneva,
where revelation reached me
from Virgil and Tacitus
(certainly not from Calvin)?
Montevideo,
where Luis Melián Lafinur,
blind and heavy with years,
died among the archives
of that impartial
history of Uruguay
he never wrote?
Nara,
where in a Japanese inn
I slept on the floor
and dreamed the terrible
image of the Buddha
I had touched without seeing
but saw in my dream?
Buenos Aires,
where I verge on being a foreigner?
Austin, Texas,
where my mother and I
in the autumn of '61
discovered America?
What language
am I doomed to die in?
The Spanish my ancestors used
to call for the charge, or to play *truco*?
The English of the Bible
my grandmother read from
at the edges of the desert?
What time will it happen?
In the dove-colored twilight
when color drains away,
or in the twilight of the crow
when night abstracts and simplifies
all visible things?
Or at an inconsequential moment—
two in the afternoon?
These questions are
digressions that stem not from fear
but from impatient hope.
They form part of the fateful web
of cause and effect
that no man can foresee,
nor any god.

—Jorge Luis Borges

(*Translated, from the Spanish, by Alastair Reid.*)

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"Did they catch on?"

"Who knows? They all laughed, of course." Susannah pointed at a glass of vodka, which I handed to her. "The parents were the same, only milder. The mother said about me to Harry, 'Such a nice, quiet girl.' "

"Ah, they're in for a shock," said Cole gallantly.

"At least you can see why Harry got so serious," I said. "It's an admirable reaction in a way."

"I don't think Harry knows how serious he is," said Susannah. "They all laughed at everything he said, too."

No one I know goes to parties alone. I suppose you might meet the man of your dreams, but with whom would you discuss him afterward? There is nothing sweeter than comparing notes, especially with Susannah. Since Dee Kilmartin knows so many people, she tends to have a single line about even those closest to her. About Susannah she says, "She never looks back." In fact, Susannah looks back all the time, but never with regret. Half of most people's stories are lost, because they're too embarrassed to tell them. Nothing was too awful for Susannah to admit to, even boast about, and in detail. You could always count on an unexpurgated, if somewhat fanciful, version of the night.

To prepare for a party together is almost as much fun, though. As Susannah dressed (much snapping and ironing, painting and powdering, then one last smooth silken tug), I speculated on some newly minted animosities and what form they would take that night. Cole, who smokes only on special occasions, lit three cigarettes, one after another. Susannah pirouetted in front of a mirror with the glass of vodka, smiling. Her dissatisfaction didn't start until we left the apartment. "The earrings are all wrong," she said as she turned the key on the police lock.

"Why?" I asked. At each ear three triangles fanned out.

"They're too sixties for this dress." That was on the first landing.

"I like the contrast."

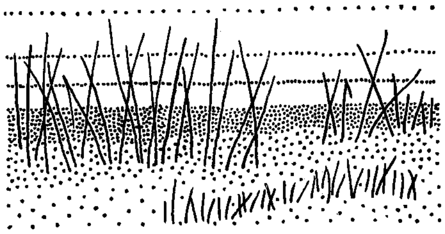
"Yes . . . Still, maybe the idea is too subtle for these people."

That was halfway down, and involved a slight hanging back.

"You look fine."

"They might think I don't know what I'm doing."

By the time we'd descended the five flights of narrow stairs to the street, she'd decided to change the earrings. Cole and I sat on the stoop in the fine spring air, and as soon as the door shut behind us he said, "You notice how she kind of *glows*?"



"Sort of. I bet she's happy."

"I bet she's pregnant. There's your answer."

"She is not pregnant, and I wish you would return to this century."

"It's true that the sort of nobility involved was far more common in the nineteenth century. You see, Harry Tierney is *not the father*."

"And why isn't she getting an abortion?"

"Sentiment."

"That is the silliest thing I ever heard."

Cole was unperturbed. "So?"

"And what do you know about sentiment, anyway?" I asked.

He was trying to rub a scuff from his shoe. "Just what I learned from you," he said.

The party that night was the best one we'd been to in ages.

A FEW days after I received an invitation to the wedding, I told Cole, since that is not the sort of thing I keep from him. He hadn't gotten one—not unexpectedly, since he and Susannah didn't know each other apart from me—so I rented a car with Dee Kilmartin. The wedding was in a church, in one of those Long Island towns with one nestling green hollow per house. Susannah had a white train a dozen pews long (I counted). Accompanying her were Harry's two sisters, Holly and Hester, each carrying a fistful of yellow tulips. I saw no sign of undue mirth, or any mirth at all. It was beautiful and quick, and it did not prepare me for what came later.

The reception was held in a country club on Long Island Sound. You could see the tiny light-colored artificial beach and the smart white rows of docked boats from the table where Dee Kilmartin and I sat, flanked by a couple of Susannah's friends from high school. We were on a kind of porch attached to the room with the bar. The shutters that had formed the outside wall had been rolled up, and the air was all crisp, cool breezes sweet enough to break your heart. Dee was talking to the friend on her side, and I was wondering what to say. I had outgrown my snide teen-age habit of asking at the reception, "How long do you think it will last?," but I didn't know what should replace it. I hadn't been to a wedding for ten years—since the summer all my older cousins tied the knot, one, two, three, the way light bulbs burn out one right after another. To be honest, this wedding overwhelmed me; it was so much how things were supposed to be and so little like Susannah throwing herself on my lap.

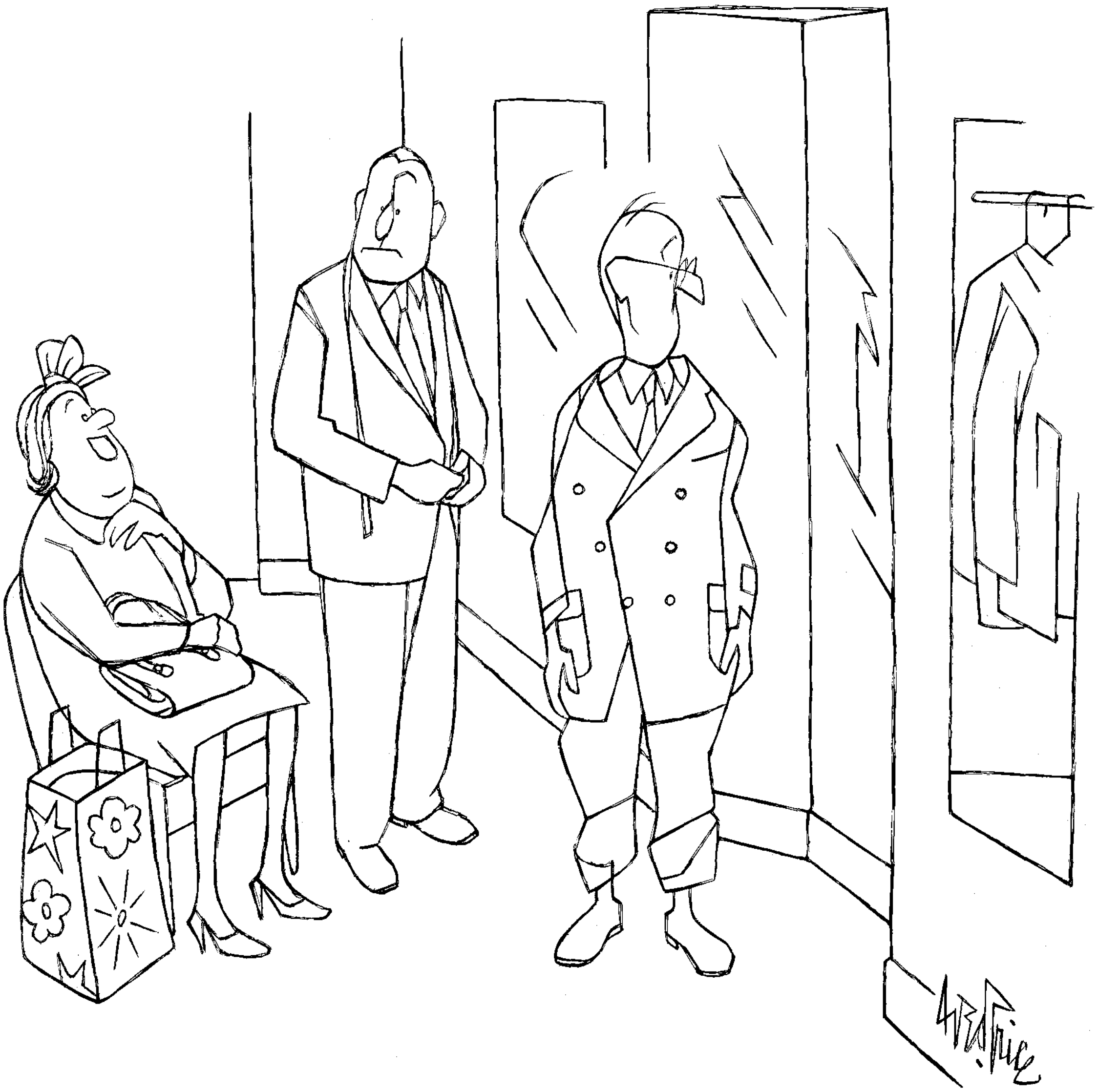
The high-school friend on my side made some small effort, but whatever she said bored her so much she didn't bother to enunciate. I was about to ask her to repeat herself when Susannah appeared, minus her train and headpiece but still in her white dress. She sat on the table between us, crossed her legs, and asked, "So how was I?"

Wind stirring the boats beyond us drove metal against metal; cloth snapped; inside, a horn began to play. I changed my mind—this would be fun. Dee leaned over me and began to make remarks. Susannah drained what was left of my drink and pointed to the pastel choker worn by the gal next to her. "Is that the kind of necklace you can eat?" she asked. Even Dee Kilmartin laughed, and she hates to be interrupted.

Susannah was sitting with her shoulders slightly hunched so that she could comfortably grasp the edge of the table, her skirt hiked up, her legs still crossed, the top one swinging freely. Because there was a shimmer in the thick white stuff of her wedding dress, her slightest movement was embellished with grace notes. So it was all the more noticeable when in a few minutes she quieted down, her eyes focussed on the arched doorway. We all looked, too, and watched Harry Tierney walk toward us.

There's never enough room in tuxedo pants for a normal guy's calves, so the fabric bunches up over them: the look is manly but silly, like callused hands sticking out beneath French cuffs. The line was particularly bad on Harry Tierney, and I felt a stab of affection for him.

He was neither flattered nor disconcerted by the attention—no more aware of Susannah's change than he'd be if his watch had stopped. Several days later, when I was talking with Cole and Joey and an unnaturally quiet new friend of his named Fern, I said, "Of course that sudden stillness could have been love. It would be a



"True. But what it says about him is something I've known for years."

• •

bore—I expect more operatic emotions out of her—but it's possible, in which case no further explanations are necessary," but I could count on Cole to disagree: "No one's saying she doesn't love him; we're not looking for crude explanations here—we're looking for something more subtle. The question is, why does she love him in a way that makes her want to marry him? Given the history, I mean."

At the time, though, Susannah's sudden quiet looked a lot more like annoyance than love. When Harry took her away to begin the dancing, I asked the friend near me, "Do you know him at all?"

Dee said, "She's made a good choice. So different from the losers she used to go out with. Remember the guy who left her stranded in Brazil?"

"Don't forget the one who almost killed her," said the woman beside her.

The fourth at the table said, "What?"

Dee said, "This is one of those secrets you keep until you realize that everyone else in the world knows it, and then you feel like a jerk."

"For some reason I always thought that story was apocryphal," I said.

"You didn't know her back then."

"Who was it? Someone I know?" asked the friend beside me.

"Some artist," said the other friend.

"He was an extremely bad sculptor," Dee amended. "That part is hardly worth mentioning. He tried to smother her with a pillow, in bed."

"Well, it was a long time ago. Besides, he was tripping. I don't think that really counts."

"I certainly don't know in what sense it doesn't count," said Dee.

The two high-school friends and Dee and I spent most of the evening outside on the veranda. Good-looking waiters brought us drinks and little triangular sandwiches and clams and shrimp. The other table out there was usually empty, and except when the setting sun shot a pure red arrow across the sound, the few people who wandered out were soon driven elsewhere by the chill in the air. I stayed for the camaraderie. When one guest too many had commented on the sunset, for instance, the friend next to me gave me a look under lowered brows and said, "Wearing a dress like that, and she's still interested in postcards." Dee, who overheard, nodded. I didn't know what was meant about the dress (Was it particularly daring or costly? To me it just looked red and long), but I liked the implication of a shared knowledge. Also, the main hall was not inviting: relatives can be depressing even when they're not your own. And lawyers can be worse. But eventually we had to go back in for toasts. As we found purses and matches, a waiter pulled at a metal bar and the shutters rolled down behind us.

Harry's brother was finishing his speech when we entered. Glasses bobbed up and down through the crowd. Some Tierneys giggled. Then a young man in a white suit lifted his glass and said, "When I first saw Susannah, I thought she was the world's greatest catch."

A contortion of the crowd pushed me against Dee, who whispered, "That was at the party she went to wearing only a fishnet body stocking and a corsage."

"Congratulations to you both," the toast continued.

"She doesn't seem to have caught the double meaning," I whispered back.

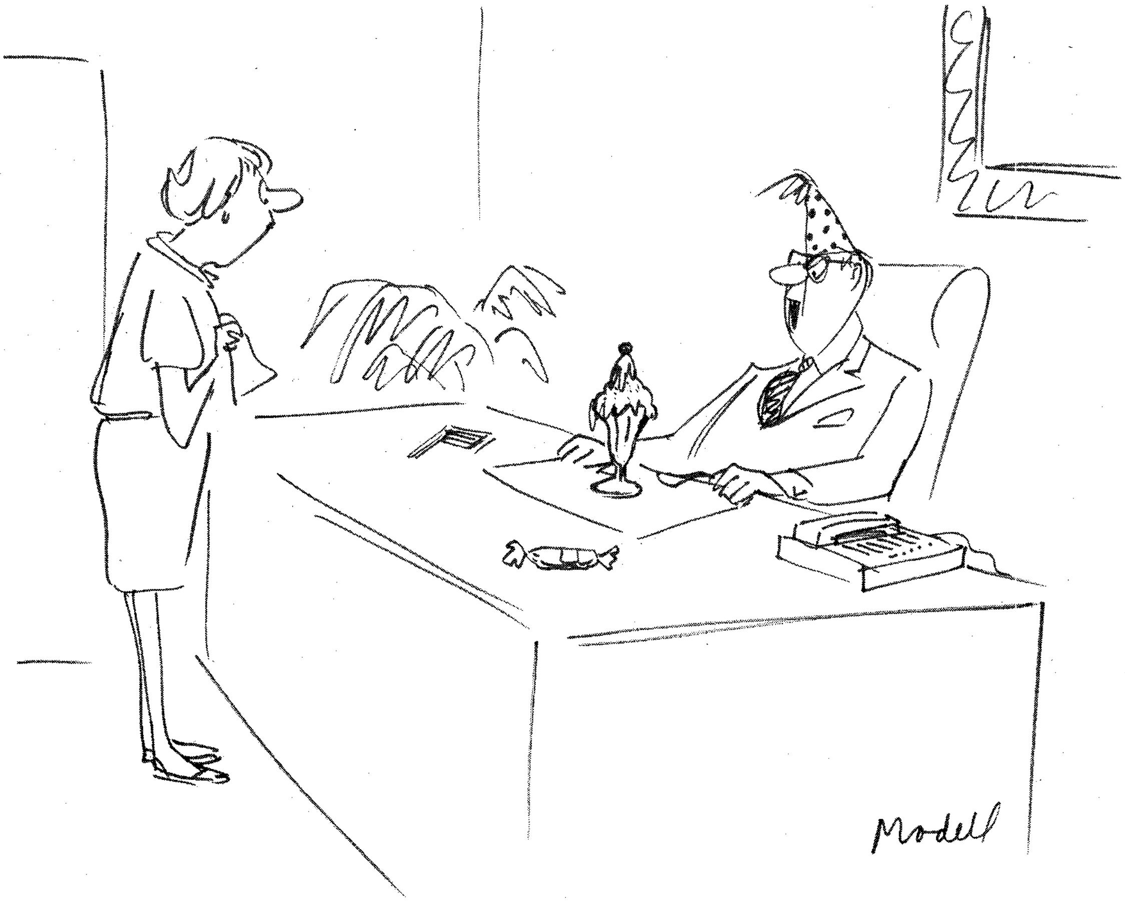
"Why? What would she do? Blush? Come on, she loves it."

Susannah did look great, up by the cake. She was too unpredictable to be graceful, but she had a wonderful sense of drama. Right now, the way she gazed out over the crowd as she acknowledged acclaim made Harry Tierney look like the politician's spouse.

Acting the politician was beyond her, however. No more than ten minutes later, when she dragged Harry's brother over to us, she said, "You really have got to hear this; it's unbelievable."

"Hear what?" he said. And sure enough, there it was—just the faintest ha-ha-ha, ha-ha-ha, as his words trailed off.

Polite as always, Dee Kilmartin said of Susannah, "Doesn't she



"May I remind you, Miss Bancroft, that today is my birthday?"

look great?" and Harry's brother replied, "All brides are beautiful, because it's the happiest day of their lives." The laugh was becoming better defined.

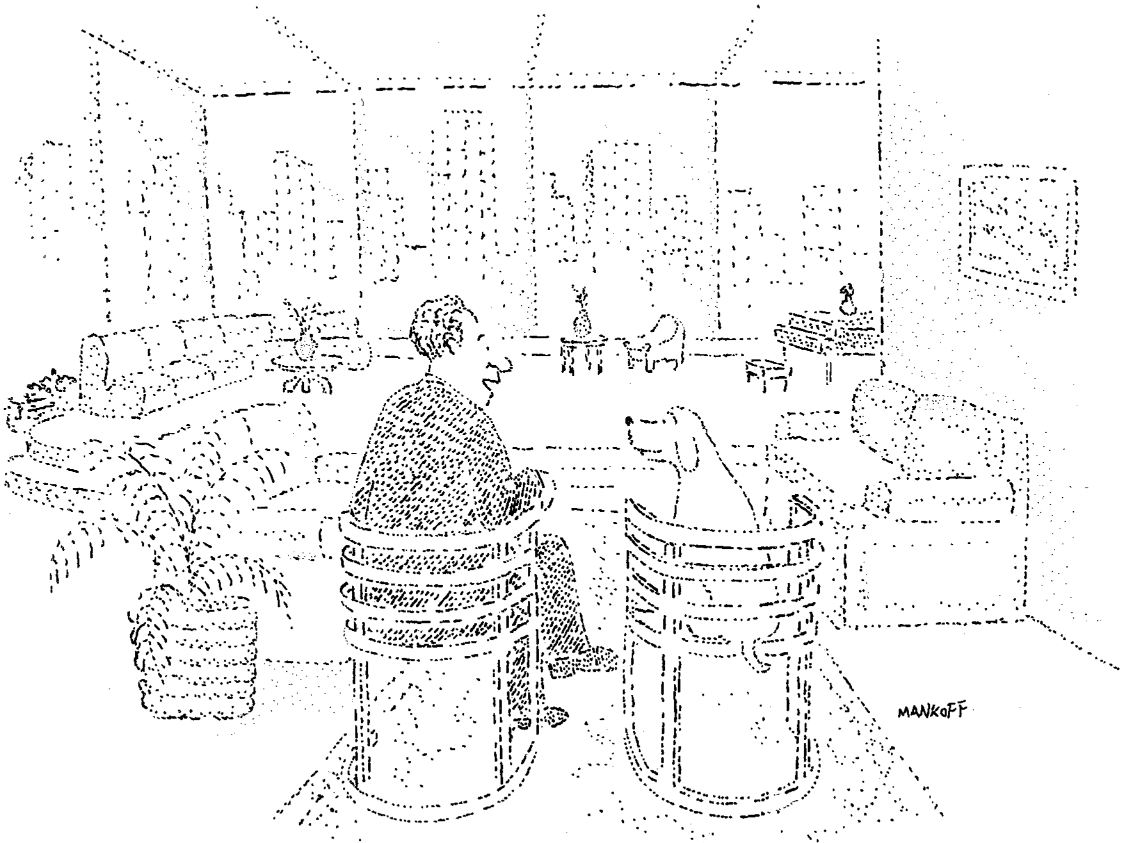
Harry came up and bent over Susannah's ear.

"Just a minute," she said, stepping away from him. Harry touched her shoulder, then thought better of it and bent again over her ear.

"Just a minute," she said. This time she jiggled the arm between them, as if to shake him off.

When he spoke the next time, the words were distinct: "But the car's waiting."

"Oh, do let me be for just a minute," she said. And then she said loudly, proclaimed really, "I'll tell you the happiest time of my life. It was when I was in Amsterdam. The American Field Service had sent me. Yes, I was an A.F.S. student—can you believe it? I'd been sent to Germany, but I couldn't stand it. The girl in the family I was supposed to live with was two years younger than I was, and she followed me everywhere. I even caught her pretending to read my diary, though she couldn't understand a word of English. So I hitchhiked to Holland. I called my mother, and she sighed and said, 'Just don't tell your father.' I had a great time. Every week I'd go on the tour at the brewery around the corner and meet another guy. I started off with Americans, but I got to like the Dutch better. When I went back to the States, everyone smirked and said, 'So how were the *Low* Countries?' But my father didn't find out for years."



"Well, we've kept our own counsel and done pretty well for ourselves, haven't we?"

• •

Harry's brother's laughter continued unabated, but Harry said, "Everyone's already heard that story." This was rude but not unjustified. I had heard it, oh, maybe a dozen times. She always got a kick out of "*Low* Countries." I looked at shoes: Dee was wearing short, square-heeled pumps; next to those were some narrower, cream-colored sling-backs.

"At least it's a good story," said Susannah. I let my eyes rise a bit higher. The line of her skirt, which followed her hips and thighs and then flared out below her knees, made her look a little like a folded umbrella.

"Yes, yes, of course," said Harry Tierney. I couldn't keep my eyes on him long. His face wasn't exactly red, but it had that bright, hot aura that made you wish you were watching something prerecorded and heavily rehearsed. It would have been easier if he'd been better-looking. Or if he hadn't been wearing that tux.

"You find it amusing, don't you?" Susannah said to the brother, whose motor faltered. "I can tell."

When I described this to Cole and Joey and Joey's friend Fern, Joey asked if she'd been very drunk, and I said, "It's hard to tell with her, but I don't think she had the chance to drink much."

Fern, who can be as spooky as an underground cave, nodded. "This person wants stability but despises it at the same time."

"Is that why she married Harry, do you think?" I asked Cole.

"Not good enough," he said. "Who *doesn't* fit that description?"

Fern said, "I'll ask my sister—she's a therapist."

As soon as "marry Harry" disappeared from our vocabulary, Susannah became known to people who hadn't even met her as the bride who wouldn't leave on her honeymoon.

I DON'T know many married people my own age. In fact, I'd say I know only one other couple at all well, and they live in Seattle. The wife and I were roommates in college freshman year, so they've visited a couple of times. Maybe it was the city that brought this out, but I swear those two could have been stuck together with Krazy Glue. They even went to the bathroom together—a practice I found disgusting. Ordinarily, I suppose, it wouldn't bother me, but this was *my* bathroom, which is three feet by four feet, including tub. I mean, where did the other person stand?

So I don't have any experience with what I'd consider normal husbands and wives, but Susannah's marriage struck me as excessively different, even from that of my Seattle friends. Despite her pointed lingering at the reception, which couldn't have gone on for more than half an hour, Susannah came back from her honeymoon as if she'd just had a great weekend fling: she was tanned, happy, rested. Also, Harry Tierney never really surfaced again. Before the wedding, Susannah had usually been busy with some arcane chore (invitations, caterers), but now she was free once more, and she showed up at parties without him, or met people for drinks for nights on end. I'm not complaining; I didn't relish the idea of trying to swap stories with Harry Tierney, but still I thought it was odd.

One night, about two months after the wedding, my phone rang. I had been dreaming that I was going from room to room looking for clues to something, when the whole place shrank to a mere doll house, and I was looking in at a lot of buzzing mechanical men—until I was completely awake, and the buzzing turned into ringing. It was two o'clock in the morning.

I figured it was someone just out of a dinner, drunk, with a great piece of gossip. I try to be gracious about this, since I used to do it myself, but I thought, Two o'clock on a Tuesday night, the worst night of the week—this had better involve incarceration at the very least.

It was Harry, apologetic, asking for Susannah. When I told him she wasn't with me, he asked, "Didn't you have dinner together? When did she leave?"

"Oh, she's with a bunch of people," I said. This was probably not untrue, although I couldn't be sure; I hadn't seen her in over a week. "Really, I wouldn't worry. She probably can't find a cab."

Harry said goodbye as if he'd been clubbed.

I tried to reach Susannah the next day at work, but she was off looking at some samples of air ducts, so I left a message for her to call. She didn't. When I finally got her the following day, I shouted. "I don't want to know what you were doing," I said. "If you wouldn't even tell me, it's got to be pretty bad. But next time you use me as a cover like that, at least give me some kind of warning."

Susannah was so quiet and meek in response I didn't know what was going on, so I called Cole and told him about it, and he said Dee Kilmartin had told him that the same thing had happened to Dotty Coombs, who hadn't seen Susannah in months.

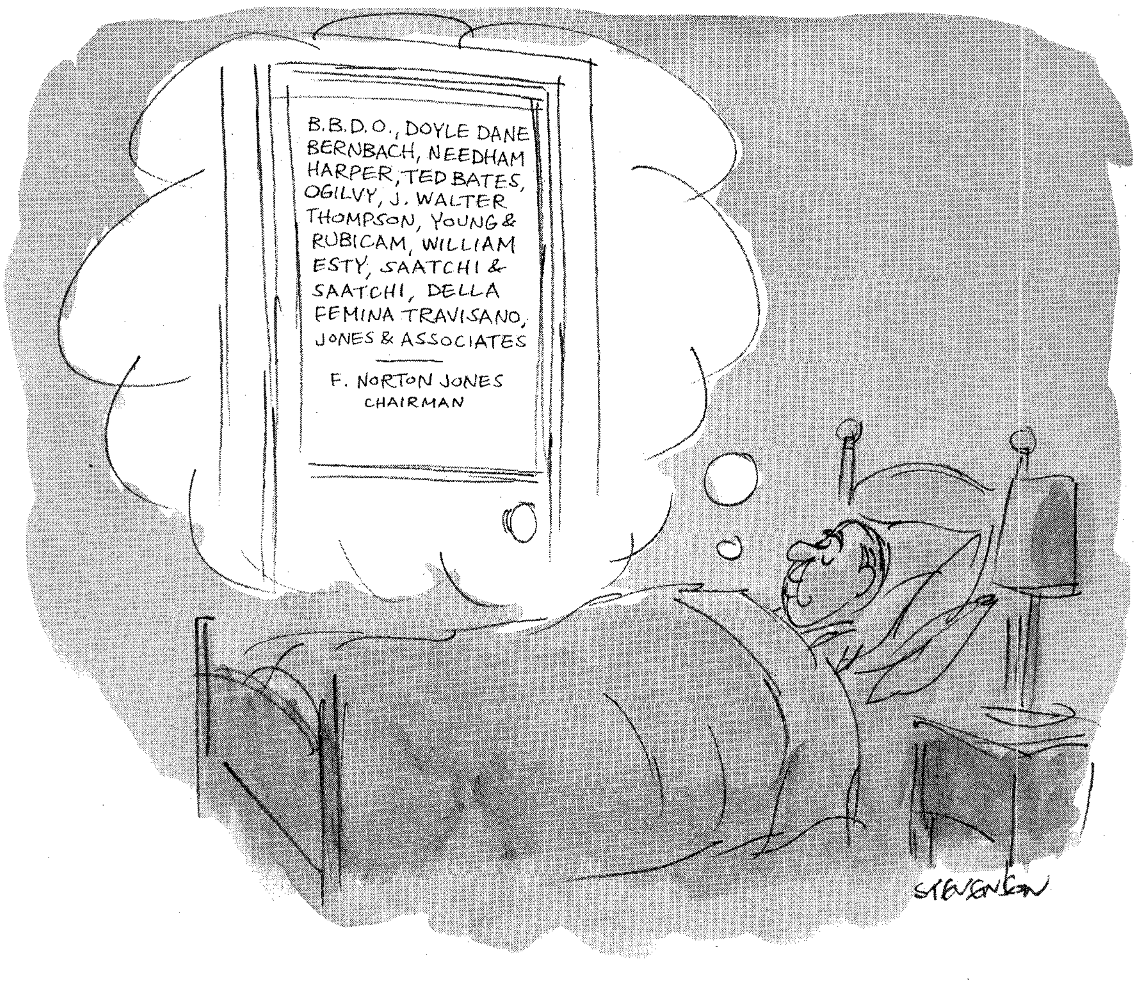
"What a criminal she's turned out to be," I sighed.

"She's *not* doing anything she didn't use to do."

"Except now she's married."

"Except now she's married," he repeated. "Harry Tierney must have put a certain kick back into her life. Maybe that's it. It's so much easier to be bad when you've got a husband. You don't have to stay out nearly so late."

It was true that Susannah was looking better than ever. She had had her hair cellophaned, and the glow that Cole had remarked on got more pronounced. There was no more talk from her about how buying food made her sick. Susannah had always excited comment, but as the weeks passed, it got ridiculous, even though I could see why heads turned. Once, I actually heard an otherwise unimpressable young man say, "So that's Susannah Tierney." Worse, Liz Quirk's cousin from Maine, who didn't know that I knew Susannah, pointed her out to me as she walked into a restaurant one night.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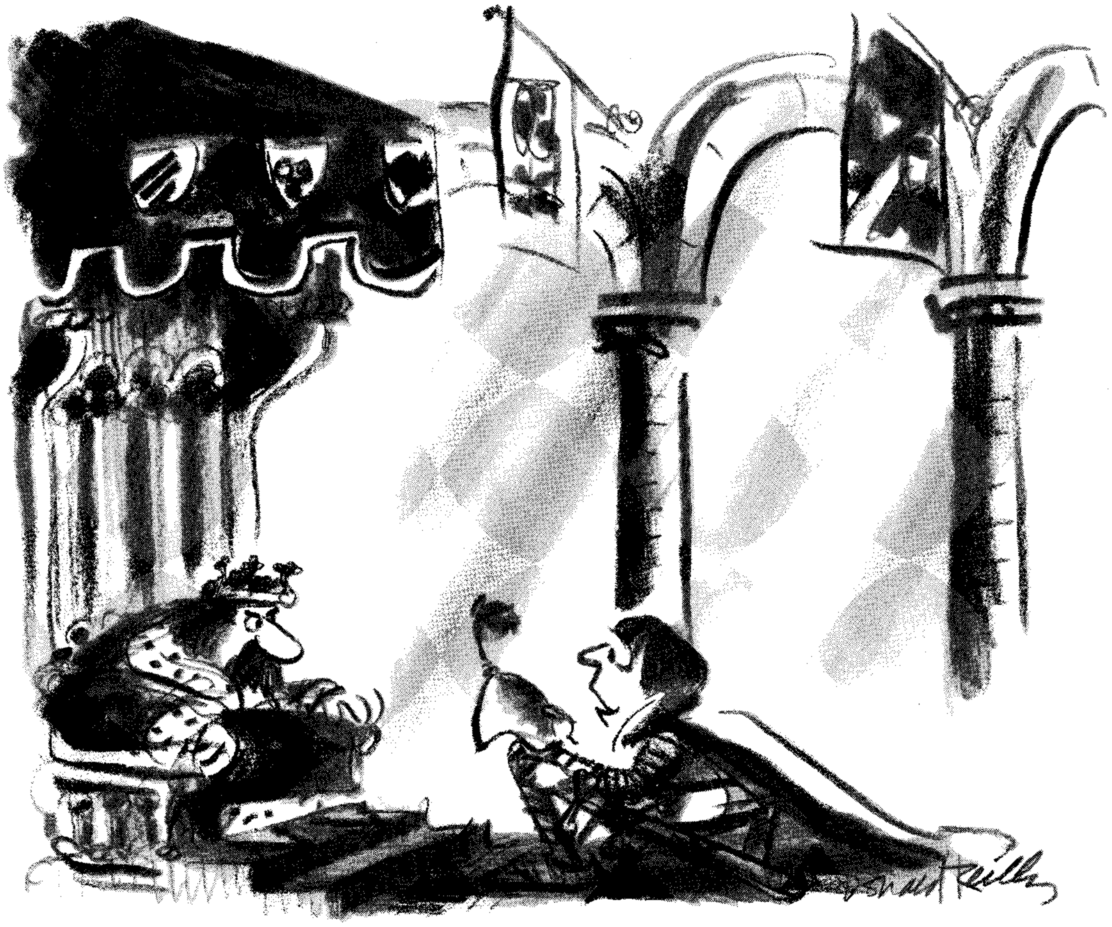
SIX months after the wedding, at one of Dee Kilmartin's parties, Susannah sailed by Liz Quirk and me saying, "Talking about me behind my back again?"

I was startled, partly because we hadn't been, and partly because of the brief, happy picture she made: like a satisfied



"Sire, the men think your battle cry of 'Continuity!' is terrific, but they'd love a chance to come up with something of their own."

• •

crocodile in a cartoon—all abashed grin.

"She's looking good," said Liz.

I nodded.

"Could it be Harry?" Liz was still gazing off in the direction in which Susannah had disappeared. "I never met the fellow, but I always wondered why *he* married *her*, rather than vice versa."

I swirled the ice cubes in my glass impatiently. This was a lie; Liz had used "marry Harry" as often as anyone else. "Brains, beauty, charm," I said.

"Conceding all that. There must be tons of women in New York you could say the same of."

"That would have Harry?"

"He doesn't sound like such a bad sort." Revisionism has set in already, I thought.

Dee, who had joined us at some point, said, "He's got the job, she's got the past—it's quite a common combination."

Liz pursed her lips. "It sounds to me like she's got the present; isn't that the problem?"

We were interrupted again, so I didn't get a chance to ask Liz if she was referring to anything new. The question would have interested me more if I hadn't been quite so taken with Susannah's grin and the startling happiness it revealed. Even if perverse (and how could Harry be a suitable husband for Susannah except in some perverse way?), the smile made me start to hum in the subway one afternoon.

The next day I tried to explain this to Cole and Dee and, simply because they were with us, two friends of hers who worked in a museum. "Isn't she the one who went on a separate honeymoon from her husband?" asked one of the friends.

"No, no," said Dee, and I said, "Not exactly." We were seated somewhat awkwardly in a Japanese restaurant. We were the only customers, but each table was built for four, so the fifth person, Cole, stuck out into the aisle. A gas heater breathed heavily beside us.

Without waiting for me to go on, Cole said that Joey told him he'd run into Susannah in the street. "He said she was with some extremely vulpine young man."

"Ah." I put my chopsticks down and folded my hands.

"He was laughing."

"Oh, that's different." I picked up the chopsticks. "A Tierney, no doubt."

"No doubt."

"Although I would hardly characterize the Tierney look as vulpine."

"But you see, it doesn't matter. Automatically he's interesting—to you, to me, to everyone—because he's not the husband."

I thought this over as Dee started to explain the cast of characters to her friends. "Susannah Tierney," repeated one slowly.

"I know I've heard of her," said the other.

"When you come right down to it, why have we been interested in any of Susannah's guys?" Cole continued. "If you forget the razzle-dazzle, they've been a pretty tedious bunch. She's a shameless headline-grabber, don't you see?"

"Oh." I frowned down the row of empty black-lacquer tables and sighed. "Of course. I don't know how we missed it."

"She's always been good at getting talked about," Dee conceded.

"Don't we have anything better to do?" I said. "It's almost enough to shut a person up."

"Well, there *are* other people in the world," said Cole.

So we wondered out loud whether Joey was really sleeping with his friend Fern. —JACQUELINE CAREY

•

LETTERS WE NEVER FINISHED READING

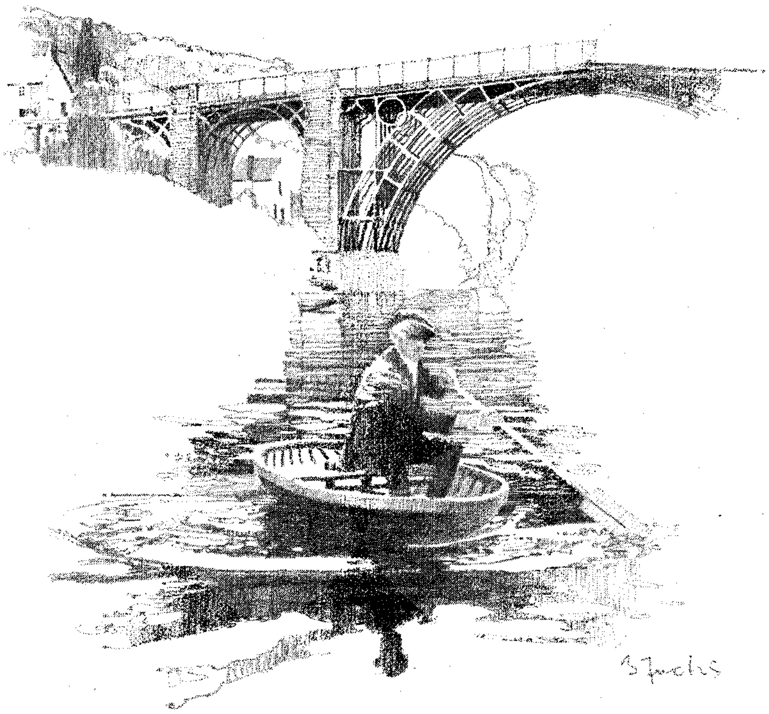
THE INSURANCE COUNSELORS
OF ROCHESTER

DEAR DR. C—:

This letter comes to you pre-crumpled for your wastepaper basket. However, before you discard it . . .

OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

A GOOD LITTLE VESSEL



ON my birthday two years ago, my wife, Margot, gave me a pair of socks and a declaration: "Your real present is going to be a bit late. You'll have to wait for it." This promise was reinforced by grins and glances between Margot and the two of my four daughters who were on hand, but naturally and impatiently I wanted to solve the mystery. Why wasn't it here right now? Did it come from abroad, or was it still growing to the right size for delivery? I suspected that it might be a fledgling Cox's orange pippin to match the Conference pear tree my daughter Liz had given Margot and me the year before, or perhaps some fisherman's boots from L. L. Bean, a new pair of which I need at about five-year intervals. But no hints were given, and though in the following few weeks the thought of the present recurred, and prompted a further question or two, the secret was kept. My birthday falls in early January, and by February I had forgotten the promised "real" present. By then, my new socks had had several wearings.

In the spring, a letter came from some old friends, Mike and Margie Robson, whom we hadn't seen in a number of years. They live in New Zealand. We had met them long ago on a ship crossing the Atlantic, and for a few years, when Mike ran the London bureau of his New Zealand newspaper, we had seen them quite often. The letter said that they would be in England for a week in May. When they arrived, Margot invited them to dinner at our house in Greenwich, in southeast London, on May 30th. Margot said to me, "I've told them to come early enough so that we can walk in the park."

May 30th was also the date of an annular eclipse of the sun, visible (so my desk diary informed me) as a partial eclipse in various parts of the world from the Hawaiian islands to Algeria; it would be seen in the British Isles in early evening. The Robsons beat the rush hour out of town in time for tea, and then we set off for Greenwich Park to witness the shadowing of the sun by the moon, giving ourselves as a turnaround point one of the pubs on the Thames, which runs a few hundred yards to the north of the park. The park is five minutes from our house, and I walk in it nearly every day with our springer spaniel, Daisy. It is beautiful—the product of French classical landscape design and English terrain and three centuries of growth, decay, and care. Daisy also finds it interesting, liking her daily opportunity to send squirrels scooting up the venerable Spanish chestnuts and to jump over park benches. She made forays now in the direction of the Old Royal Observatory, which stands on top of a steep escarpment and provides a fine prospect of London. I suggested we make the climb, to view the eclipse and the city, but Margot and the Robsons were eager to steer a course across the park, toward the boating pond and the gate at the east end of the National Maritime Museum, which would allow us to walk most directly to the river. This way would also lead us to the Greenwich Meridian, which in 1884 was designated zero degrees longitude for the sake of accurate navigation and timekeeping, and whose centenary that year was marked by a white stripe painted through the park on the grass, joining brass strips that here and there denote the division of the world into zones east and west of Greenwich. On the spot where the meridian is marked at the Old Royal Observatory, visitors like to stand with their feet apart, one in each zone.

The light was diminishing as we approached the boating pond, a concreted depression at whose center a flotilla of aluminum rental canoes was moored for the night. A man appeared from behind a tree, clutching a camera. Several other people were just visible by the pond in the temporary twilight. The camera seemed to be trained on me and then on Daisy, who was loping toward a round black object that lay near the pond, looking like an open umbrella without its handle or like a huge truncated toadstool. As I got closer to it, it took on more of the appearance of a small geodesic dome, but such a structure would not seem to have called for the presence of the man with the camera, whom I had by now recognized as Piet van der Merwe, a good friend and an officer at the Maritime Museum. With a polite request to Daisy, who was sniffing at the thing, to stand aside, I lifted it and turned it over on the grass. It was about four feet wide and perhaps a bit more than four feet from front to back, and it sat like a big black basket. The skin was tar-covered canvas, lined inside with a lattice of green-painted laths. A pine thwart spanned its diameter. Though I had never seen such an object before, I knew what it was. Several fluid ounces of Celtic and possibly ancient British blood run in my veins.

I said, "Golly, a coracle."

Margot said to me, "Yes, happy birthday."

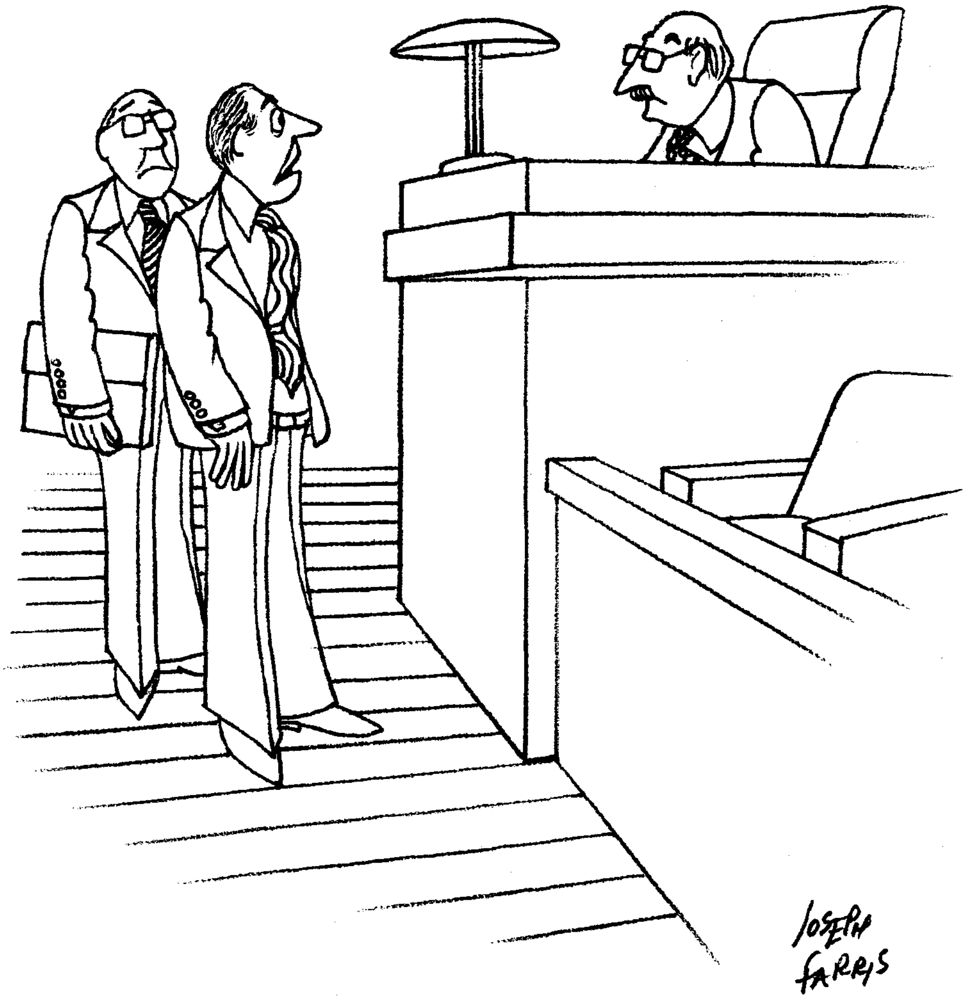
A demonstration was in order, and was provided by a colleague of Piet's, a young woman who had experience in handling coracles. My coracle was picked up easily and launched at the pond's edge. Unlike most other boats I have owned, it did not leak a drop. The young woman from the museum stepped gently into the middle of the craft, hanging on to the concrete rim of the pond. The paddle, nearly five feet long, looked like a large wooden spade of the sort children use at the seaside, and with this she sculled skillfully away, making a kind of figure-eight motion in the water out in front of the coracle. Then she turned and came back in. Piet tried it next. Clearly, getting in could be difficult—water lapped over the rim at the front and then, as Piet moved the other way, at the back. He sat down quickly. When he had returned from a short trial voyage, we lifted the coracle out, decanted several pints of water, and relaunched it. It was now the new owner's turn. I understood from what I'd seen that the art of embarkation involved counteracting the coracle's inherent tendency to slip sidewise if it was given half a chance, leaving the would-be occupant in the notorious, irremediable position of being stretched farther and farther between sea and shore—until the splash. I negotiated that part of the operation safely and seated myself gently. Suddenly, the coracle rocked: Daisy had jumped into it to join me. I pushed off, while Daisy sat at my knee, staring forward as if on lookout. I tried an orthodox canoe-paddling stroke on one side, and then on the other, and the coracle whirled round, first clockwise and then widdershins. Next, I attempted to emulate the motion the young museum woman had made over the bows, slicing the water from side to side, and this finally began to pull the coracle forward, more or less in the intended direction. In a conventional rowboat, Daisy usually moves around, disturbing the trim (and annoying the oarsman), but throughout this little voyage she sat remarkably still. However, as we approached the edge of the pond but were a foot or so away from land, she made a sudden spring to terra firma.

We carried the coracle to the Plume of Feathers, a pub not far from the nearest park gate and closer than the pubs on the riverside. The coracle had a strap fixed to the thwart so that it could be carried on a person's back, with the handle of the paddle stuck in another loop and the paddle over one's shoulder, taking some of the coracle's weight. We sat in the forecourt of the Plume, a few yards east of zero degrees, and drank beer to celebrate the arrival of the coracle and to welcome the Robsons. It was a lovely bright May evening, the partial eclipse having happened without my being fully aware of it. I asked Margot where she got the coracle and how she got it here.

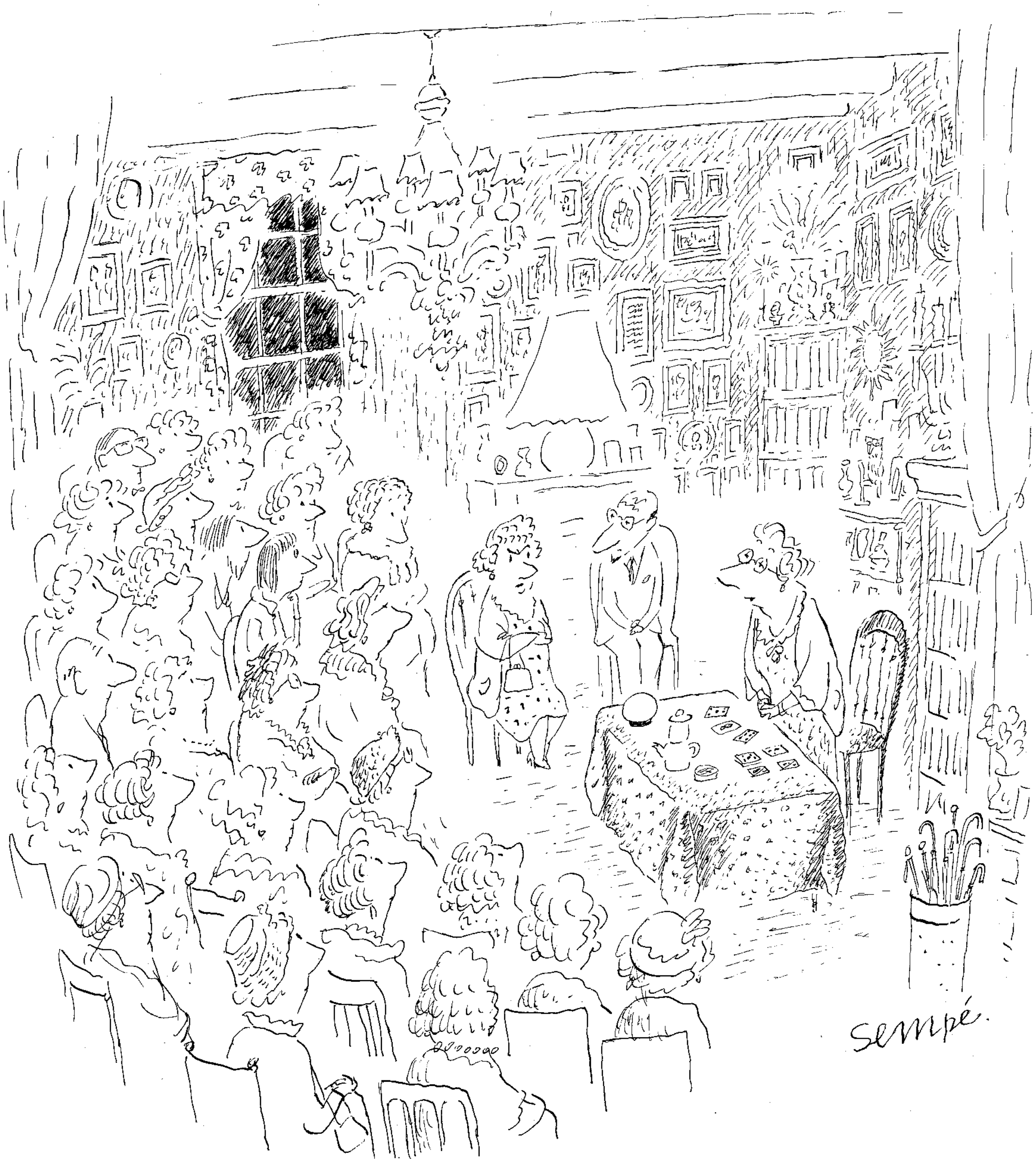
She said that at a Christmas party she had met Neil Cossons, who had just become the director of the Maritime Museum. He had come from the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, on the Severn River, in Shropshire, where he had directed the conservation of several early Industrial Revolution sites. Mr. Cossons had told her that there lived in Ironbridge a man, Eustace Rogers, who was possibly the last coracle-maker in England. The museum at Greenwich had one of his coracles on display. Margot went to see this, decided that a coracle was to be my birthday present, and wrote to order one from Mr. Rogers, at his home, Severnside, Ironbridge, Shropshire. Delivery was promised for early May. When that time came, she told a completely unsuspecting me that she was going to visit Liz, then teaching in a school near Birmingham, and was taking along Liz's boyfriend, David. What I wasn't told was that, on the way to see Liz, Margot and David went to Ironbridge, twenty-five miles northwest of Birmingham, and collected the coracle. It stayed overnight at Liz's, going up and down nine floors in the lift. Then it returned to London on top of the car and was quite at home for several weeks at the Maritime Museum, courtesy of Piet, until it was brought forth today.

At dinner, Margot produced some photographs she had taken at Ironbridge which showed Mr. Rogers demonstrating the handling of the coracle on the Severn, just below his cottage, while in the background, arching across the river, was to be seen the world's first cast-iron bridge, built in 1779, from which the village takes its name.

A fortnight later, Piet called in with the photographs he had shot at the launching in the park. How pleased everyone looked! In many of the photographs, I was wearing a smile of pure happiness. It is surely rare to receive a birthday present that not only is an absolute surprise and delight but



"Twenty years? What ever happened to revolving-door justice?"



"I know it's late, but may I ask all of you to join me in a few moments of deep concentration, so Betty MacDonald will not be disturbed again at three in the morning by the ghost of Victor Hugo?"

also promises surprises and delights to come.

• •

FROM the window of my room in the Tontine Hotel in Ironbridge, the gravelled surface of the bridge seems to make a broad but personal path to the hillside across the river. March sun creates deep shadows within the gorge that the Severn has furrowed here. Frost on the bridge gravel lasts long in the mornings, since the bridge, which has been closed to vehicular traffic for more than fifty years, is trodden at this time of day only by people who live in the cottages on the far side and walk across to shop in Ironbridge or to wait at the bus stop for transport to take them up to the center of the new town of Telford, about five miles away. From my window I cannot see the river itself. It runs fifty feet below the center of the cast-iron arch, which is mounted on piers a hundred feet and six inches apart. (The arch forms a nearly perfect semicircle, and a full circle when it is reflected in calm water.) Ironbridge began as an extension of the much older community of Coalbrookdale and is built mostly on the steep northeastern slope of the gorge. Coalbrookdale, a mile to the northwest, was originally Caldebrok Dale, meaning "The valley of the cold stream"—the cold stream being a tributary of the Severn. With hills bearing coal, iron ore, tar, and clay, and with rivers to furnish power and transportation, the Coalbrookdale area had the right qualifications to become the birthplace of modern British industry.

Eustace Rogers lives in "the Dip," which is the lowest level of the village—a narrow terrace of land with half a dozen cottages, fronted by a footpath about twenty feet above the river. The Dip is a hundred yards or so downstream of the bridge. I walk down after breakfast; a path and some steps descend below the war memorial—a granite plinth with names of the fallen surmounted by a statue of a Shropshire infantryman wearing a First World War uniform that seems too large for the frail figure within. Halfway down, I can see whether a plume of gray smoke is rising from Eustace's kitchen chimney or whether a door is open in the long shed beside the footpath, where he has his workshop, or whether he is out working in his garden. From spending time with him in the last few days, I know that Eustace feels free to talk after he has, in his words, "got going and fed the animals." The animals are a one-eyed tortoiseshell cat, referred to as Little 'un or Mate; two ferrets, one brown, one blond, kept in cage-doored boxes at the edge of his vegetable patch; and a varying number of ducks, including several pairs of mallards and a white domestic duck gone wild, which come up from the river for a daily handout. These are the fewest creatures the Rogers establishment has sustained in some years. Eustace's father, Harry Rogers, generally had half a dozen dogs, a score of ferrets, a tame fox or two, a badger, and a

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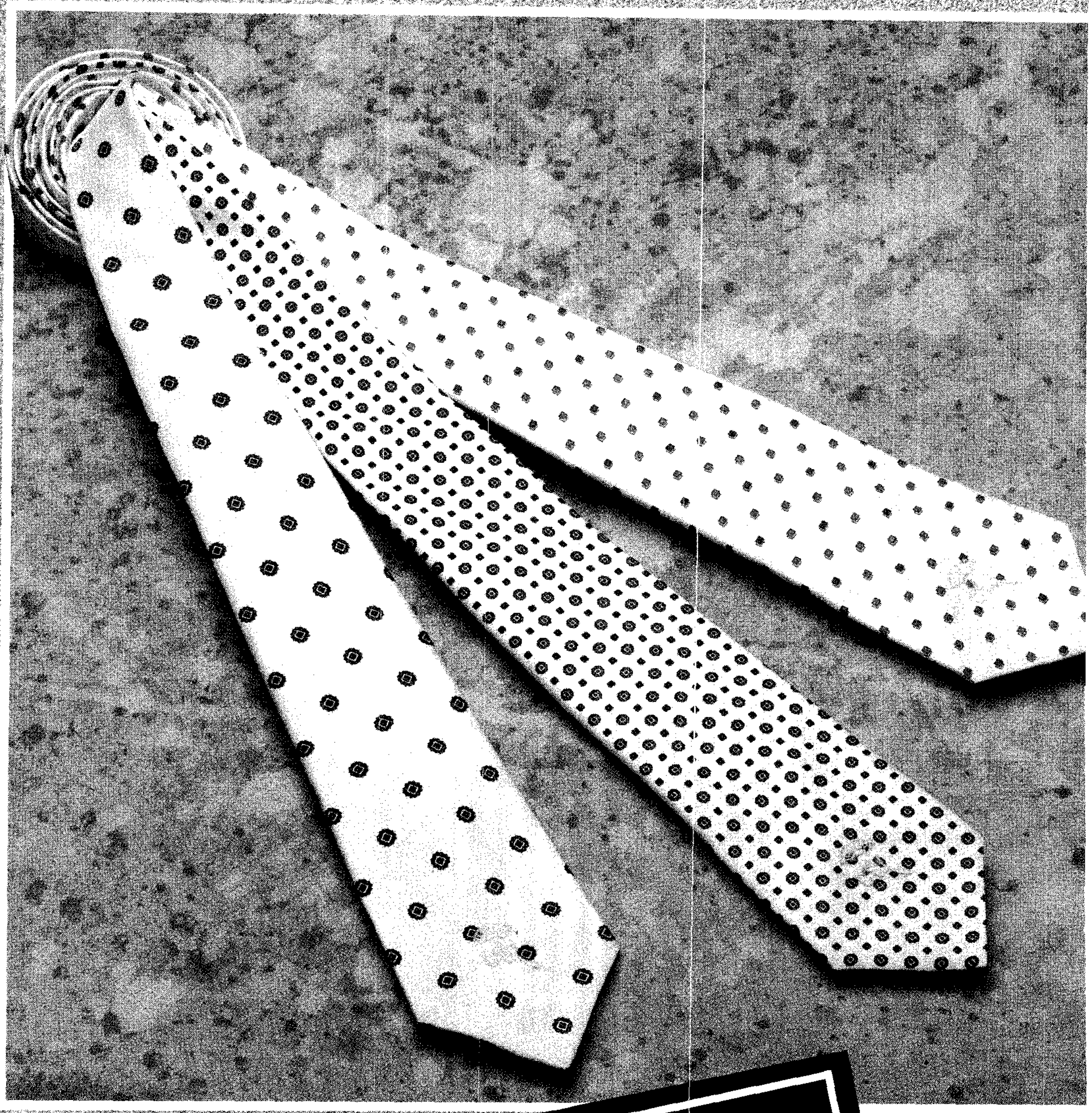

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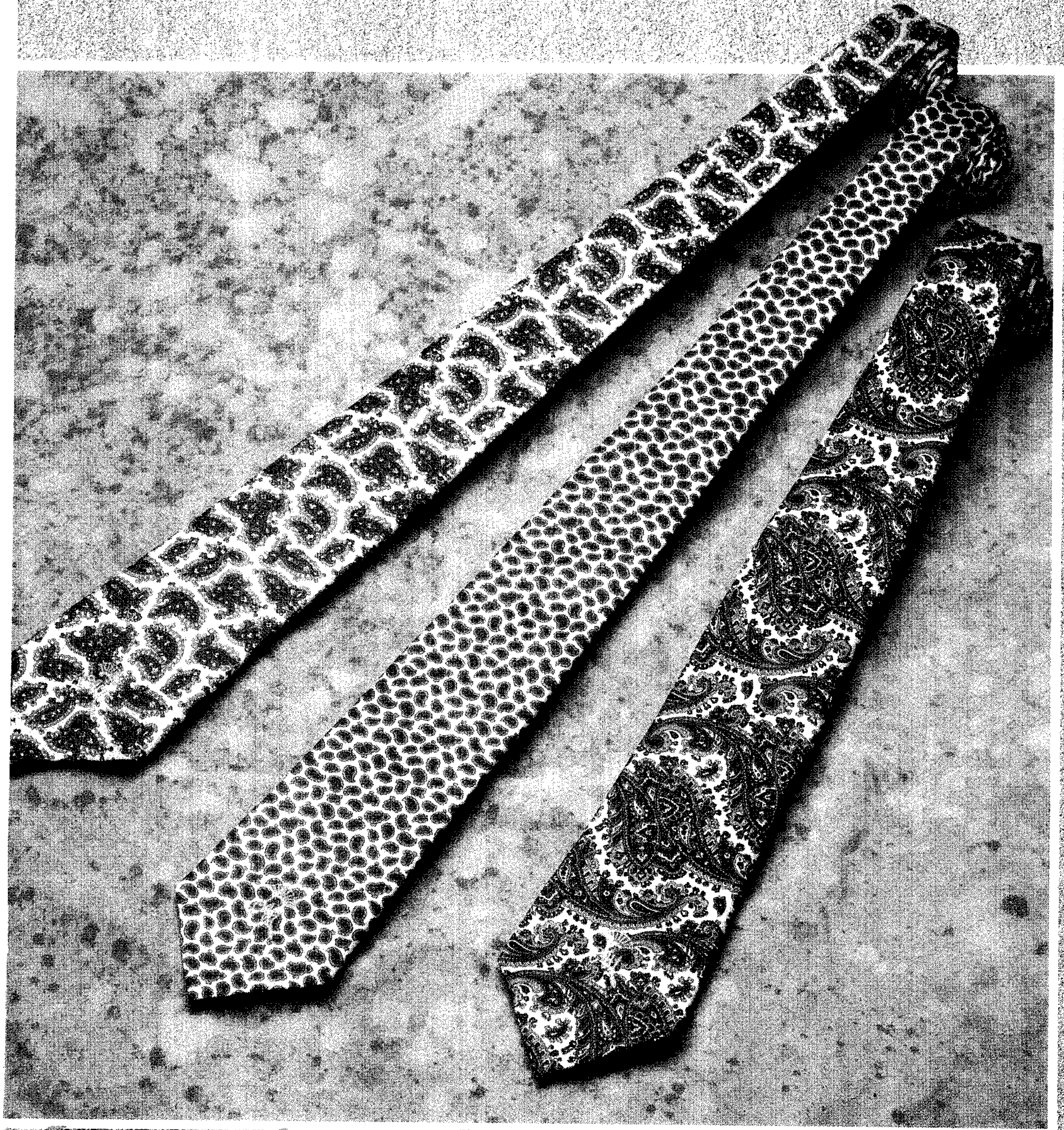

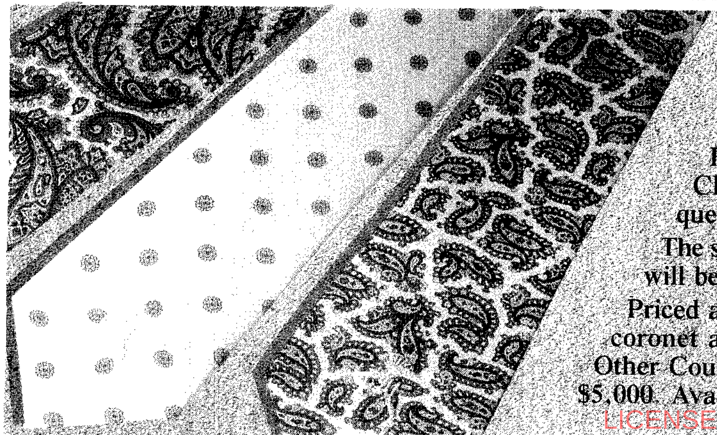

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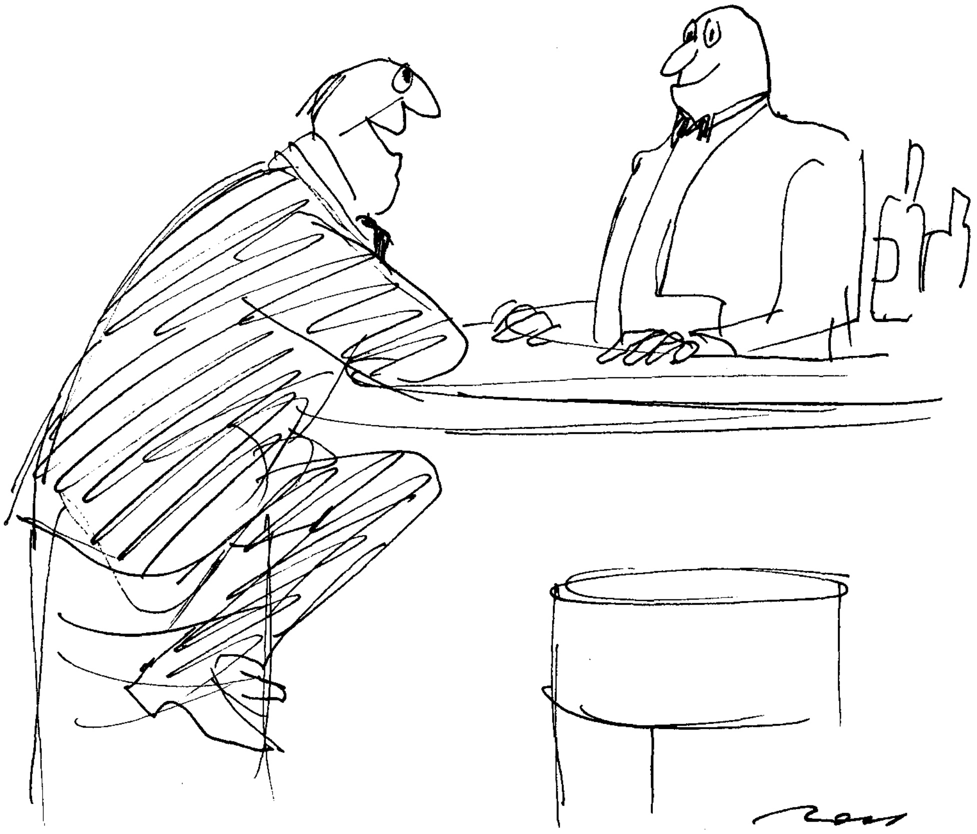


"What the hell, make it a double. I'm living beyond my means anyway."

• •

number of birds, including a jackdaw, to which he often talked. One of his foxes, named Billy, used to take long walks downriver but always returned at night. Eustace, asked if he has any dogs, points to two pieces of privet hedge he has trimmed into terrier shape, one on each side of the path leading to the front door.

Eustace—or Eusty, as people in Ironbridge call him—is seventy-one, and he lives alone in the house, a few yards from the site of a long-demolished cottage where his grandparents and, he thinks, his great-grandparents lived. He was born—on August 5, 1914, two days after Germany declared war on France and one day after England declared war on Germany—in the house of his mother's family, a hundred and fifty yards up the hill. He has two sisters, both married; one lives in a cottage a few doors away along the Dip, and the other in Broseley, a town a mile away across the river. The hillside of the gorge comes close to the back of Eustace's house, where a heavy-timbered table bears the skeleton of a coracle under construction, and a run-down conservatory, used for storing garden tools and firewood, shelters the approach to the back door. I tap on the side window, seeing Eustace inside reading the *Daily Mirror;* he beckons me in. The back door is just ajar, and I walk into the back room—a sort of dining-living room, which contains an old-fashioned range with an open iron fireplace and a side oven which sometimes smokes, because of downdrafts off the hillside. The room now has a smoky tinge to it, made more evident by a thin beam of March sunlight filtering through the one window. Eustace offers me a cup of tea from a brown teapot. It sits on a square table, which is covered by an old newspaper, on which also rests a small, elderly television set. Two wooden armchairs are on either side of the table, facing the fire, and, motioning me toward one of them, a rocker, Eustace resumes his seat in the chair that was his father's and his grandfather's. He is wearing a faded houndstooth-check cap slightly aslant, revealing straight gray hair. He is also wearing an open shirt with a kerchief knotted at the throat; two cardigans, one over the other; a navy-blue donkey jacket with the faded letters "C.E.G.B." (for Central Electricity Generating Board) on the back; black work trousers; and heavy black boots. On a brass hook to the left of the fireplace is a cap that appears to be exactly like the cap he is wearing. From a brass rail under the mantelpiece hangs a pair of woollen socks.

Our talk is occasionally interrupted as Eustace goes to the conservatory for a log or a shovelful of coal for the fire, or to one of two front rooms for a book, a photograph, or some papers, which he keeps in drawers or boxes or in piles under a piece of furniture. At one point, he shows me a book from the early nineteenth century called "Picturesque Views of the Severn," by a writer named Thomas Harral, in which is mentioned the claim that a Severn man once went in a coracle downriver and down the Bristol Channel to Lundy Island, in the open sea. The man spent a fortnight on the voyage, in fine weather, and returned to "as many congratulations as though he had performed the circumnavigation of the globe."

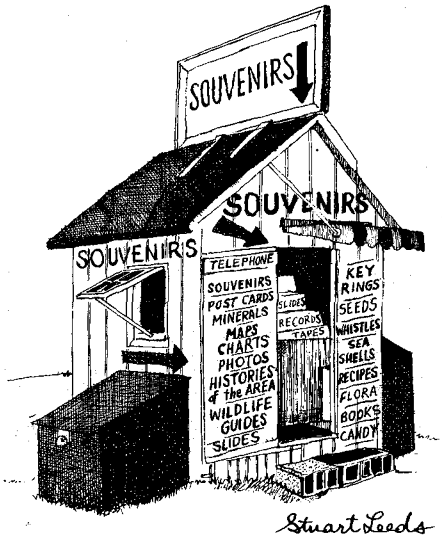
Eustace has light-gray eyes, at once innocent and keen, and a Shropshire-country way of talking—a hint of Welsh in the accent, and occasional usages like "me" instead of "my" (as in "me dad") and "thee," instead of "thy," for "your." He talks of his family with a reverence and affection that don't preclude humor, particularly if a story concerns himself. In telling me that he was born just uphill at his maternal grandparents', he says, "So I've always felt like a foreigner down here." It would be hard to imagine anyone more evidently at home.

Eustace Rogers' grandfather Tommy Rogers worked on the last river barges and built coracles, which he used for fishing, eeling, and poaching. Tommy Rogers' son Harry was a forager, a rabbit catcher, a coracle builder, and a brickyard worker. Eustace went in a coracle for the first time when he was nine and had just learned to swim (his father would not sell a coracle to a nonswimmer), but before that he had started accompanying his father on rabbiting expeditions. "I remember—oh, a very early memory—one night my father said, 'Come on,' and we walked in the dark to Buildwas, two mile, and we met a gamekeeper, Bill Whitrick, waiting under a tree," he told me. "He said to my father, 'What's brought the dog for, Harry?' Dad said, 'It's not the dog, it's the lad.' I was holding on to his coat so as not to get lost. This gamekeeper helped us put out the rabbit nets. You had to be in with the gamekeepers. We never interfered with their pheasants."

Eustace went to primary school in Ironbridge, where he was good at arithmetic. "Oh, I could top the class in that," he says. "When I was eleven, we were coming back from Madeley, up on the hill, one day from football, and Mr. Wragg, the headmaster, asked if I could sit for the scholarship to the grammar school. I asked my father, and he said no. 'You'd look good going to grammar school with the seat worn out of your trousers,' he said. I left school in 1928, before I was fourteen. The headmaster said he knew of a job for me, but I said, 'I'm going with my dad, rabbit-catching.' "

Eustace reckons that his father got three-quarters of his livelihood from or by way of the river. "We were reared on rabbits and fish," he says. After 1926, the coracle could not be used legally for netting salmon, but it was handy for laying out eel lines, for salvaging driftwood, and for carrying home the catch on rabbiting expeditions. When the Severn was in flood, rabbits were often marooned on banks or in parts of fields that had become islands. On such occasions, a coracle was the perfect craft for a forager and his rabbit net: he could carry it several miles upstream and, when the rabbits had been caught, load up and paddle back downstream. In the days of Eustace's grandfather, rabbiting was often regarded as poaching, and the enemies were gamekeepers, landowners, the police, and magistrates (who were generally local landowners). But in Harry Rogers' time the rabbit was considered by farmers to be a pest as well as food, and the rabbit catcher was recognized as a useful fellow; farmers would appoint a catcher for their land and make an arrangement for the rabbits' taking—so many shillings an acre, or the catch split fifty-fifty. Harry Rogers' dogs and ferrets were part of his rabbiting gear. The catching season was from harvesttime to March; then the foragers wisely desisted, knowing that otherwise they would be robbing themselves of rabbits in following seasons. So in spring and early summer Harry Rogers hired himself out as a vermin hunter, worked in brickyards, and built a coracle or two.

The rivermen of Eustace's grandfather's day have a Homeric status in and around Ironbridge. They rank alongside other Shropshire heroes, such as Old Parr, who is said to have been a hundred and fifty-two years old when he died, in 1635, and Captain Matthew Webb, who was born in Ironbridge and lived in nearby Dawley, and who, in 1875, became the first man to swim the English Channel. Tommy Rogers was born in 1843 and died in 1924 and often swam with Captain Webb, until 1883, when Webb died trying to swim the rapids under Niagara Falls. Tommy Rogers weighed about two hundred and fifty pounds. "He was one of the toughest, hardest-drinking buggers in the world," says Eustace. Well into middle life he boxed annually at the Ironbridge Fair, and as late as 1923, when he was seventy-nine, he took part in the diving contest at the Ironbridge regatta. That year, he disappeared after a dive, and many thought he had drowned, but he was discovered hiding behind a bush across the river, laughing at those who were searching for him. Tommy had two sons, Harry and Jim, and two daughters, both of whom emigrated to Canada. In 1862, Tommy Rogers, aged eighteen, was the first poacher to be tried at the court in the new Ironbridge police station. He was found guilty and was given a three-month sentence. "There were fifteen poachers along here, and maybe half of them in jail at any one time," Eustace says. "One, named Nacky Brading, lived with my grandparents for a while. He was a slight man, no weight hardly, and he didn't do a regular day's work in his life. The poachers would go out in the afternoon with nets under their jackets, over their shoulders, or wrapped round their chests. They kept coracles along the river, where they might come in handy, or else they'd take one with them, for loading the rabbits into, so the others could walk home not worrying if they ran into a policeman." The police, according to Eustace, had nothing to do in those days except chase poachers, and were spurred on by local landowners like "old man Kynnersley," at Leighton. There were duels between police and poachers, and pitched battles, and assassinations. "The police drowned old John Goodwin," Eustace says, "but it was never proved—they got away with it."



Just before his death, Tommy Rogers realized that if he died in his bedroom his sons would have difficulty getting his ample coffin down the steep and narrow stairs of the old cottage in the Dip, so he told Harry and Jim to put him in the chair by the fireplace downstairs. Then he asked them to fetch a pint of best bitter from the Three Tuns, the nearest inn. Ironbridge legend has it that he took a long draught of the beer, said, "Goodbye, my bonny lads. I'm off among the straight-faced ones," crossed his hands over his stomach, and, without further ado, died. According to Eustace, his Uncle Jim was nervous about what the neighbors would say if they saw that the proprieties of dying had been ignored, so he and Harry carried their father upstairs. Whence, in a coffin the next day, they indeed found it hard to get him downstairs again.

Eustace says of his father, "He didn't drink like my granddad, and as long as he had tuppence for a packet of Woodbines he was happy. He had a hell of a sense of humor, and he could romance to an extreme. He kept saying he was going to take a coracle across the Channel, but he never did." Harry Rogers, one suspects, enjoyed giving anyone listening to one of his stories good measure. In a BBC radio interview broadcast in October of 1941, he said, "My chief manipulation of the coracle is eeling for eels, and this is how I make this pay. Five hundred hooks baited should be a profitable night—say, about sixty pound of eels, shilling per pound, quick sale. Most important thing is to know the haunts of the smaller bait—stone roach, better known as bull knobs, and Jack Sharpes, and camper eels, four inch long. They're all fixed into hook in a craftsmanship manner, laid in lines across the river from out of the coracle, and with cat stones attached to keep them on the bottom from night to daybreak, me on the riverbank camp-

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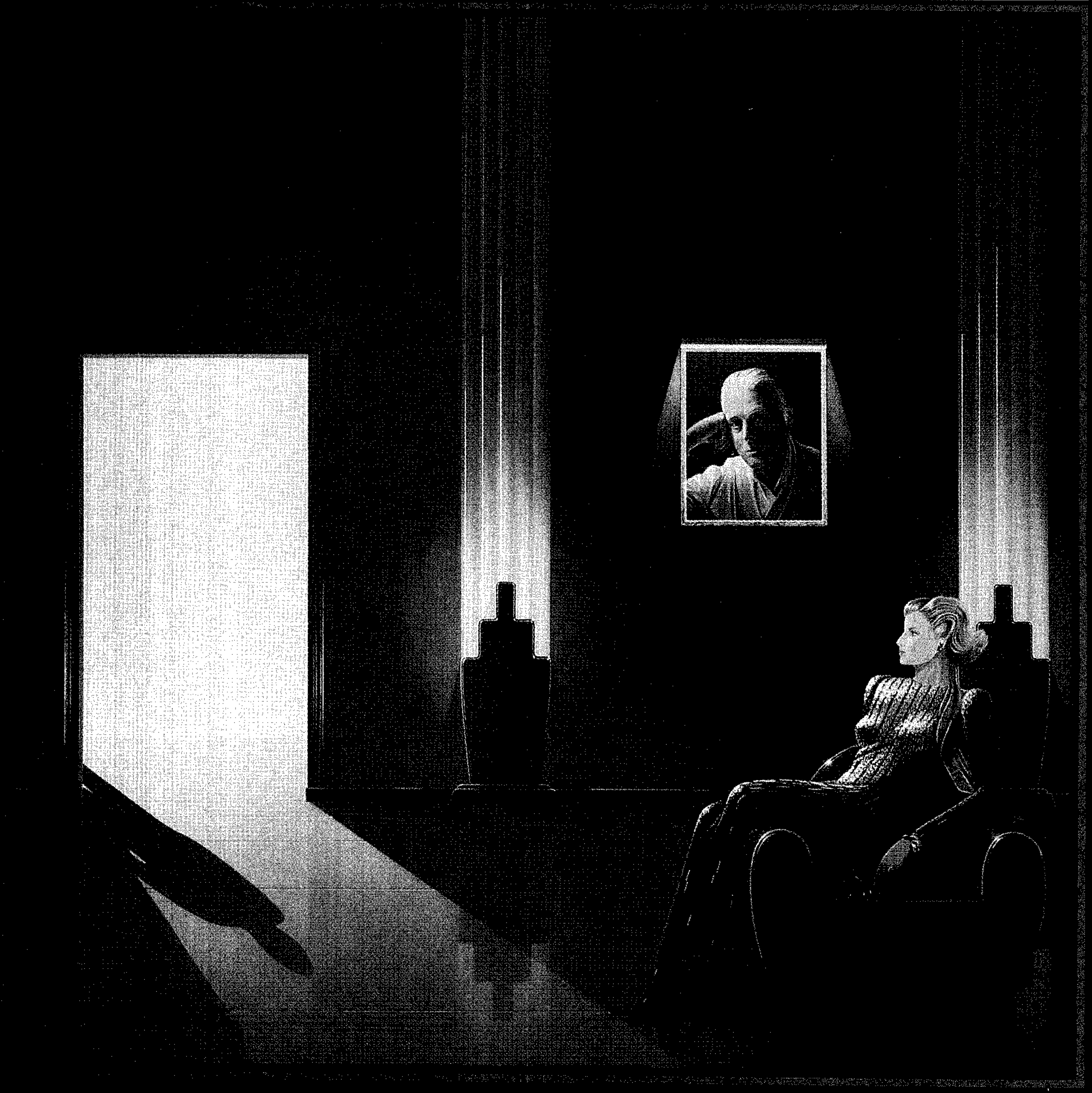

Une rencontre

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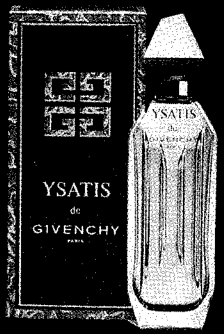
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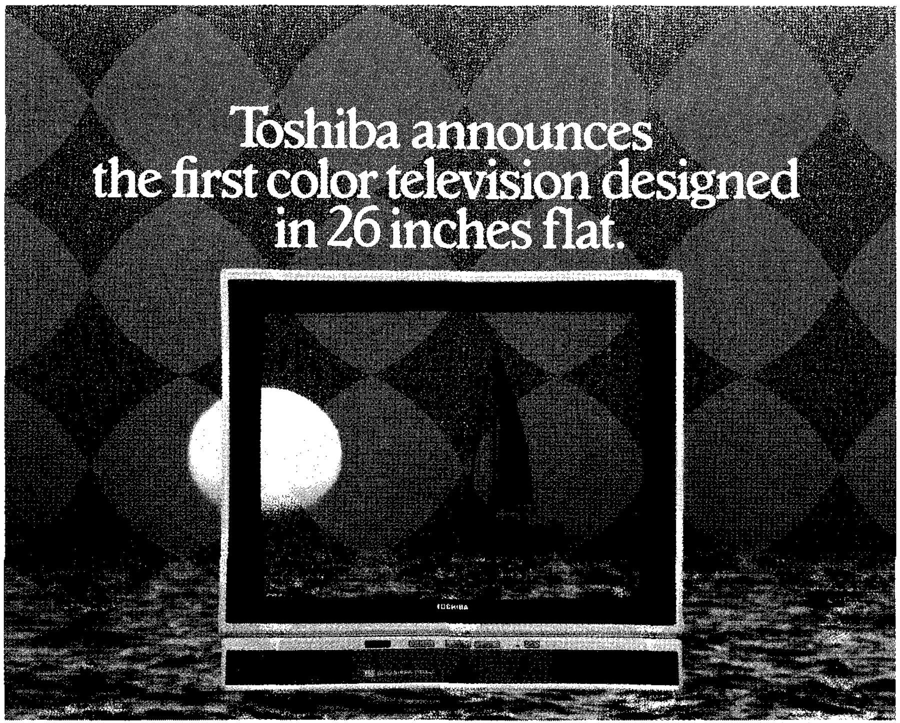
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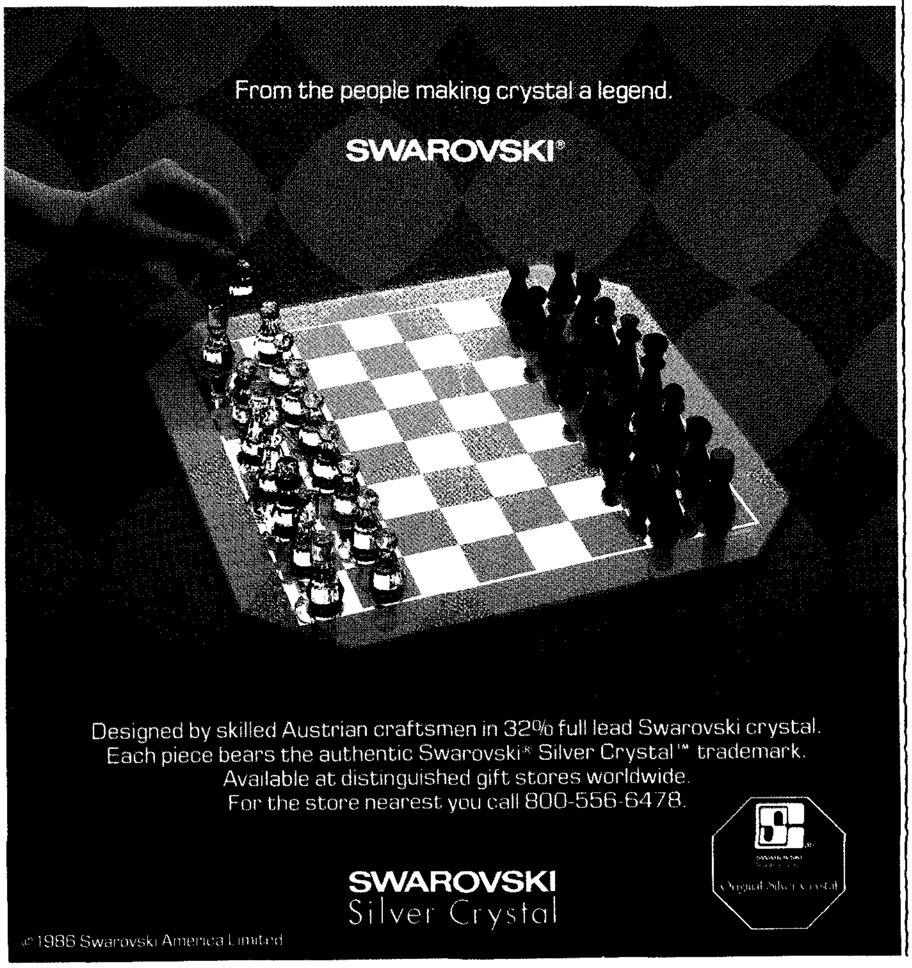

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ing in front of a good fire, with the old drumming-up tin always on the boil, and the silent of night in the air, and with my mind full of memories I long to think sweet of."

On rabbit-hunting expeditions, Harry Rogers often used to walk upstream along the now dismantled railway line to Cressage, on the other side of the river, carrying his coracle. In one story that Eustace likes retelling, Harry made such an excursion late on the afternoon of December 31, 1924. "The wind was howling out of the west," Eustace says, "and he was having a job to walk. He'd got to a row of twelve poplar trees we called the Apostles, and he was sitting having a rest when he saw another coracle coming along. Under it was old Nacky. Dad said it was such a wild night he didn't think it was worth going on. Nacky said, 'Oh, you're bloody frightened.' So they went on up the railway line, walking on the sleepers. It had got dark, but the moon was up. They were opposite Leighton, passing under an arch, when something told my father to get off the track. There was the wind, of course, and you can't hear a thing behind you when you're carrying a coracle. Dad used to say, 'I jumped aside and the next bloody moment there was the light of the engine. I thought as the train went by, Nacky's on the front of that engine and they'll be taking him off at Cressage station. So, sadly, I set off home. I hadn't gone more than a few yards when there was a shout from up the bank. It was Nacky, still with his coracle. The wind had blown them there.' The gale continued, and Nacky and my dad took shelter in a platelayer's cabin. Nacky had a watch, which he consulted, and at midnight they wished each other a Happy New Year. Next day, they came down the river at dark with their coracles full of rabbits."

Most of Eustace's life has been taken up with work more regular than that done by his father and grandfather. Between the ages of fifteen and forty, he was a farm worker; for twelve of those years, he served as a cowman on a farm two miles from Ironbridge, cycling to and from work every day and then some nights going foraging with his father. He used to arrive at the farm at 6:30 A.M. "We had thirty-five milkers, all done by hand, and the milk wagon came at 8 A.M.," he recalls. "Sometimes, on light nights, I was there till 10 P.M. There was thatching, and hedge-laying, and making stacks. Just about everything was done by hand—hay to be carried, mangels to be pulped. For twelve years I never had a day off. I worked Sunday, Good Friday, Christmas Day. There was very little money in it, but I'm not complaining. If I had my time on earth again, I'd not change it." Eustace was paid twelve shillings and sixpence a week when he began. "I gave ten bob to my mother and kept half a crown for spending money." Farm wages were then the lowest manual wages in Britain, but the work was steady and he got on well with his employer. In the mid-nineteen-fifties, Eustace gave up farming and went to work at Buildwas power station, a huge coal-fired generating plant that still dominates the water meadows alongside the Severn, at the northern approach to the Ironbridge gorge. There one of his main jobs was at the intake, where river water was brought in for cooling purposes: using a large rake, he tried to keep the screens clear of river-borne debris. "It was a rough job in winter, but it was out-of-doors and clean, away from the coal dust." He retired with a pension from the C.E.G.B. when he was sixty-two; the power station had been enlarged, and four immense new cooling towers reduced the need for Severn water. Since that time, Eustace, among other things, has been building more coracles per year than his father or his grandfather ever did.

EUSTACE knows the river well for about twelve miles upstream and six down. He is sensitive to its moods. "Severn," he calls it, not "the Severn." It is the longest river in Britain, rising in the Welsh mountains upon Plynlimmon, tumbling and then winding in big loops into the Marches, passing through such cathedral cities as Worcester and Gloucester, and debouching into the Bristol Channel's extreme tides. Ironbridge is about halfway from source to mouth. Eustace says that the Severn here can rise or fall ten or so feet overnight—can change from a placid, slowly moving stream deep in the gorge one day to a massive body of water in spate the next. "If it was blowing a gale from the west, Dad would say, even if there wasn't a spot of rain here, 'Now, get ready for Severn in the morning.' He knew it would be raining up in the mountains, feeding the headwaters. If the wind was southwest, he knew there'd be less to worry about—it would be the Teme, which enters Sev-

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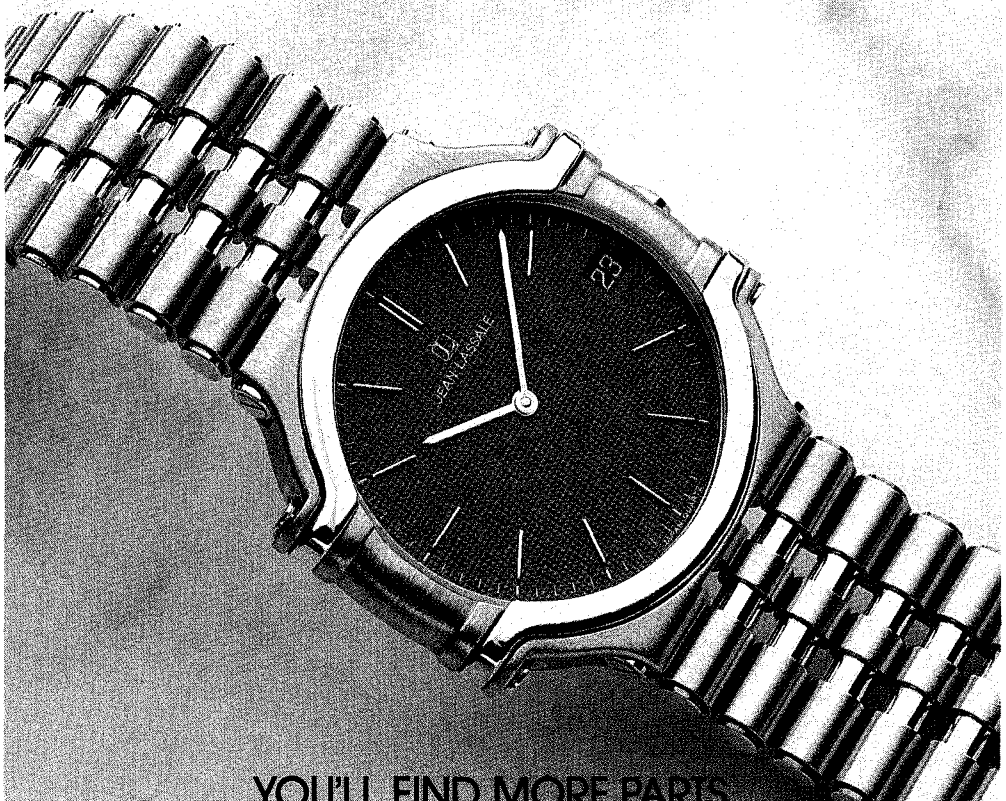
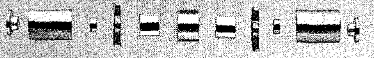
ern just below Worcester, well downstream of here, that would be rising." On Eustace's shed is posted an official river-authority notice: "Warning! This river is extremely Dangerous and *not* suitable for bathing." A life ring is hung on a post near one of his topiary dogs. Since dams and reservoirs have been built in the mountains, according to Eustace, the river's behavior has ceased to be so devastating. "There's been no great flood since the late nineteen-forties, though we're not sure there won't be another."

The river in its middle section is by no means a trench of uniform width and depth. In some places there are pools, irregularly interspersed with shallows, old fords, and former weirs, and there are stretches where the river runs for a long period through flat ground, and stretches—sometimes with rocks and other obstructions—where it falls sharply over a short distance. In the section of the river just downstream, between Ironbridge and Coalport, the Severn falls roughly eight feet in two miles. The riverside placards put up by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust refer to that area as "Canoeists' White Water," and Eustace calls it "the rapids." He says, "It's the worst stretch on the river—you can stand with the water up to your knees in one place and then it's forty feet deep the next step." The river's often placid appearance is beguiling, tempting people to swim in it, though they do so less now than in the past. Eustace remembers his father's saying, after a spell of fine weather suddenly broke, "Get ready, they'll be needing us," and very soon they were. Eustace's grandfather rescued many people from the river; he also recovered numerous bodies, including those of two gamekeepers—their punt had capsized—a year after they drowned. Harry Rogers had a similar record of lifesaving and recovery. In the "long flood" of March, 1947, he took food and coal by coracle to riverbank families marooned in their upstairs rooms. "When there were tragedies on the river, they always came to us for help," says Eustace. "We never accepted a ha'penny for giving it." Eustace, to his regret, has never saved a life, but he has pulled out several bodies. One, three years ago, was that of a four-year-old boy; another was that of an elderly woman, whom a doctor tried in vain to resuscitate. Eustace prefers to talk about happier finds, which the Rogers family has been well situated to make. On one occasion, a





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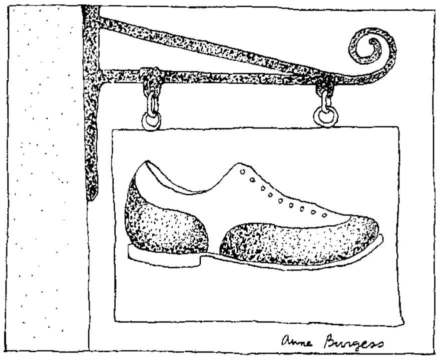
dog came floating downriver, standing on the roof of its kennel, to which it was chained, and barking loudly; Eustace and his father rescued it. Harry Rogers regarded anything floating downriver as rightly his, and anglers sitting on the far bank would often alert him with the cry "Flotsam!" He would then appear from the shed, launch his coracle, and waylay, for example, the limb of a tree; he would hammer in a nail or a staple, attach a line, and tow it to the bank. He recovered a wheelbarrow, a fruit cart, and a small lorry, which took more than the gear at the Rogerses' disposal to haul out. Eustace says there are fewer such trophies in the river now.

THE shed has been standing for fifty-three years. It is roughly thirty feet long and ten feet wide, its walls are of wood, painted red on the outside, and it has a corrugated-steel roof. It stands on the river side of the footpath, and below it the grassy bank falls away steeply to the Severn. Eustace works in the shed daily during three seasons of the year. "I've been foolish enough now and then to go buggering around in there in winter, but you're the loser when you do," he says. "It's often colder in than out, and then you can get laid up from it." Eustace's is the shed of sheds, the apotheosis of the tarred and creosoted wooden huts that stand in many a British garden and allotment, forming workshop and storage place, refuge and repository for stuff that may come in useful one day. It contains a twelve-foot workbench and tools for woodworking, some of them up-to-date, with painted and varnished handles, many others dusty, rusty, and pitted brown-black with age. Objects line the walls, lie on shelves and benches, rest on the rafters, or stand on the floor to be squeezed past. The shed contains five coracles: up in the rafters are a calico-covered type and one built by a man in Shrewsbury some time ago, which is almost rectangular; standing on edge on the floor are a cowhide version and two new calico-covered models, one of them finished and the other still awaiting its coat of bitumen. I note coils of rope and line, a disconnected stove, lengths of chain, nets, fishing tackle, a miner's lamp, walking sticks, stacks of timber, heaps of wood shavings, jars of nails and screws, a chimney-cleaning brush, and a six-and-a-half-foot-long two-man timber-felling saw with sharklike teeth. Eustace's one-eyed cat is asleep in the cobweb-filled window that faces the river and is warmed by the sun. As we sidle along, Eustace tells me the name or nature of tools and devices I don't recognize. There is a scoop for pouring molten metal. There are some implements for sampling cheese. There are tailors' shears, sixteen inches long and four pounds in weight. There is a barbed device that is dragged along the riverbed to recover eel lines. There are traps for catching moles, badgers, foxes, and birds. There is a device for crimping the ends of refilled shotgun cartridges. There is a "barnacle"—a claw-shaped double hook that is put in a bull's nostrils. There is a thirty-year-old but seemingly unused wheelbarrow, with thick timbers and an iron-shod wheel, that Eustace made—a copy of the barrow that came from the river. There is a gas mask issued during the First World War. There are several pairs of old clamp-on ice skates; two lawnmowers; many kinds of spades; leather kneecaps; gum boots; punt poles; and a number of chains, with china handles, for working the overhead cisterns of toilets. There is a trunk full of fishnets and a box of wooden net-knitting needles. Eustace tells me, "In wintertime, we'd sit making nets, my dad on one side of the fireplace, me and one of my sisters on the other. It was a lovely pastime. But we were finished with fishnets in the late twenties, when they made netting illegal. After that, we made rabbit nets, pig nets, even nets for football goalposts."

One small, lidless box in the shed contains various items that Eustace, for some reason, has collected here rather than in the house: photographs, postcards (two from London, a city Eustace has never visited), newspaper clippings, a couple of old books, and a scholarly article about coracles from a 1936 issue of *The Mariner's Mirror*. It was written by James Hornell, a noted small-craft historian. Hornell may have sent it to Eustace's father, for there is among the illustrations a photograph of Harry Rogers, captioned "An Ironbridge Rabbit-Catcher Afloat in His Oval Coracle." Eustace lets me borrow the article to read that evening back at the Tontine.



FROM Hornell's work I learned that the British coracle, though related to the Irish seagoing curragh, is in fact a far older form, derived from the same source as the bitumen-coated *guffa* of Iraq and the skin-covered coracles of India and Tibet. (I read elsewhere that the Babylonians had coracles on the Euphrates, and that Herodotus had described them as being "round as a shield.") Julius Caesar provided the first record we have of skin-covered craft in Britain. Recounting his military experiences in Spain in 49 B.C., at a time when his communications had been cut by floods and the destruction of bridges, Caesar said that he had ordered his men to make wickerwork boats covered with hides—boats of the kind that he had learned about in Britain a few years before. Later Roman writers also referred to British skin-covered craft, whose use was noted in remote places in a period when iron tools were elsewhere making it possible to construct planked boats. In the Middle Ages, various Welsh writings, both prose and poetry, mentioned coracles, usually as being covered with black bullock hides. Froissart, in his chronicles of 1360, described the matériel used by Edward III's army for the invasion of France, which included six thousand carts used for carrying tents and other equipment. "Upon these carts were also carried many vessels and small boats made very artfully of boiled leather," he wrote. What preserved the coracle for the next six hundred years was its suitability for catching salmon in the shallow, rock-strewn rivers of Wales and the border country between Wales and England.

Only a very few changes in coracle construction seem to have occurred in the course of two millennia. One change was the use of sawed laths instead of split ash or willow branches in the making of the lattice framework and also instead of plaited hazel or willow withies in the making of the gunwale. Another was the substitution of other materials for the hide covering—first flannel, which was introduced at the beginning of the seventeenth century and was still in use in southwest Wales till about 1870, and then canvas or calico, which began to be used around the end of the eighteenth century. Although these new coverings needed to be coated with pitch and tar, the resulting coracle was half the weight of a hide-covered craft. The size of a coracle remained the same as it had been when it was determined by the size of a single hide, and even in the nineteen-thirties the tarred calico or canvas covering was referred to as the skin or hide. And the basic design continued to be that of "a broad, ovate, latticed framework in the form of a shallow, wide-mouthed basket."

When Hornell wrote, the coracle was confined to some of the rivers of Wales and the Marches: the Teifi, the Towy, the Taff, the Cleddau, the Severn, and the Dee. On others, like the Usk, the Wye, and the Monnow, coracles—often called "thorrocles" or "truckles" in those parts—had disappeared, Hornell said, "within the memory of middle-aged residents. . . . On the Scottish mainland the last survivors danced on the turbulent bosom of the Spey, but that is a memory of many years ago." The practice of net fishing from coracles lasted in southwest Wales after it was banned elsewhere. Coracles were also used for retrieving ducks that had been shot and for crossing rivers where there were few bridges. Farmers used them to reach marooned animals and when washing sheep. For general fishing purposes, they were immensely handy. Hornell wrote:

> Great are the advantages for angling on a rocky, shallow river of a coracle over any other kind of craft. A coracle draws so little water . . . that it can go almost anywere; the paddler, using one hand only, can turn and twist it at will and shoot rapids and thread narrow channels in a way quite impossible in a canoe. When need be he may slip behind a boulder or a jutting rock, or hold on with paddle, gaff or foot and so fish places out of reach of the angler in waders or in any other craft but a coracle. In his basket boat the angler can snuggle in safety against a rocky ledge in a back eddy with foaming white water on one side or perhaps on both.

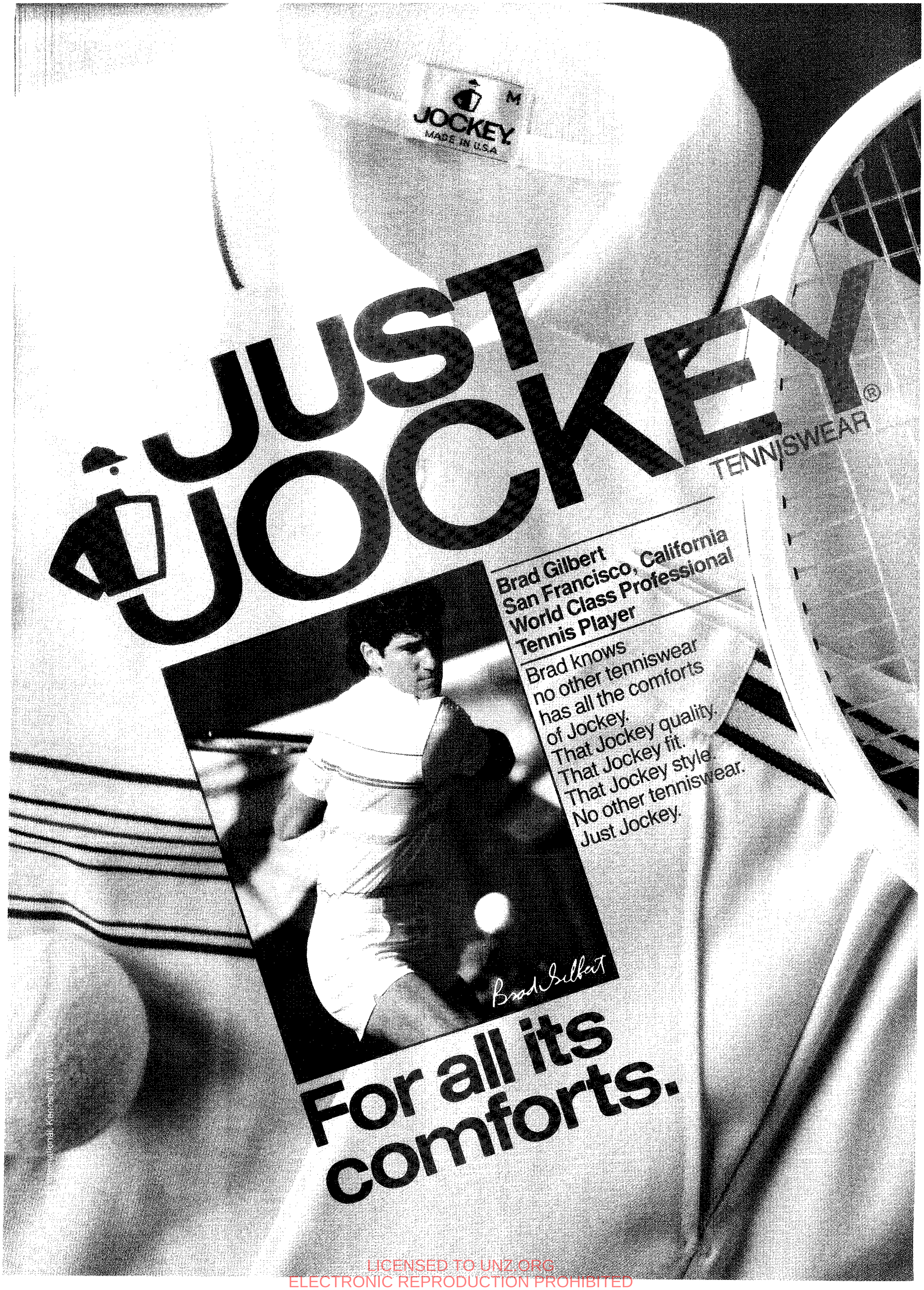
Coracle fishermen usually carried a wooden club, or "knocker," for stunning any salmon they caught, for, as Hornell noted, "a lusty salmon is a dangerous guest in a flimsy coracle."

Hornell also noted that coracles had an indefinite life. The skins could be patched. New coverings could replace old. If a hole appeared, it could be blocked for the moment with the coracle man's cap, his foot pressed down on it, while he paddled for the bank as if the Devil were after him. A coracle owner usually carried in his pocket an old piece of pitched calico, which he could warm at the edges with a match and plaster over a hole. When coracles finally wore out, they were burned; the tar insured that they made a fine bonfire. Hornell said that this practice might be a relic of an ancient rite in which decrepit coracles were sacrificed to river gods. One Carmarthen man saved three old coracles to the end of the First World War and burned them, in celebration, on Armistice Night.

At the time Hornell was writing, coracles still flourished on the Severn between Shrewsbury and Arley—a distance of some forty-three miles. (Ironbridge is roughly halfway between the two places.) This was a shrinkage from 1914, when they had been found over a range of eighty-three miles—from Welshpool, about thirty-seven miles upriver from Shrewsbury, to Bewdley, some three miles down from Arley. At Ironbridge, Hornell wrote, "the Severn brawls through a deep gorge, magnificently picturesque but wearisome to cross on foot, for the old iron bridge . . . spans the river at a high level; besides this inconvenience, a penny toll is levied on every foot passenger. So the people in the depths of the gorge keep coracles handy, if only to cross to the other side." In 1936, Hornell observed eight coracles in use in Ironbridge, and a few others south to Arley, most of them made by the Rogers brothers, Harry and Jim. "Formerly nearly every cottager had his own coracle, hung in a tree when not in use," he wrote. The design of the Ironbridge coracle had stabilized in the form of a shallow bowl, with the two ends equally rounded. (In coracles built for racing, the fore end was sharper and the length was increased.) The only exception to the double-ended symmetry of the ordinary coracle was the position of the seat, which was placed slightly aft of amidships. The last coracle race at Ironbridge was in the mid-nineteen-twenties. The racing coracles had names painted across their bottoms, and therefore visible only when the coracles were upside down. Some of the names in use on coracles in a race at Llandrinio Bridge, between Welshpool and Shrewsbury, on May 28, 1798, for a silver cup valued at five guineas, were Nancy the Rower, Peggy, and Lucy.

THE claim is sometimes made on Eustace's behalf that he is the last coracle-maker in England. When I ask him about this, as he stands by the coracle-construction table in the garden, he objects: "That's never been my statement. I don't know what other men are doing. There's a man up in Shrewsbury who can make them still. He came down to get some waterproofing from me a few years back. Shrewsbury football team have a ground near Severn, and when the ball goes in the river they need a craft to get it out. They had an ordinary boat, but this man said a coracle would be better for the job." In any case, Eustace is probably the only man who builds coracles regularly, and is almost certainly the only one who can still construct the ancient, hide-covered type. "How I came to do that was about fifteen years ago," he says. "There's one up in Elgin Museum, in Scotland, from the River Spey—they think it's two hundred and fifty years old. The museum wanted a replica and asked me. I was able to get the materials and put it together. I now rear about three of the skin ones every year."

Coracles, Eustace thinks, may originally have been built upside down, with the ends of the bent splints, or ribs, stuck in the earth to hold the shape while the interweaving was going on. But he builds, or "rears," his right way up. ("Rears" is a verb also used in the coopering trade, a barrel being reared rather than simply made.) For the hide-covered coracle, the splints are of hazel, which Eustace soaks in hot water to make them additionally pliable. At a point that will form the middle of the bottom, the splints are held temporarily in place by two wooden clamps bolted to the construction table. Lengths of string keep the ends of the splints at the desired width of the coracle until the plaited willow or hazel withies forming the oval gunwale have been fastened in place. Willow is also woven in basket-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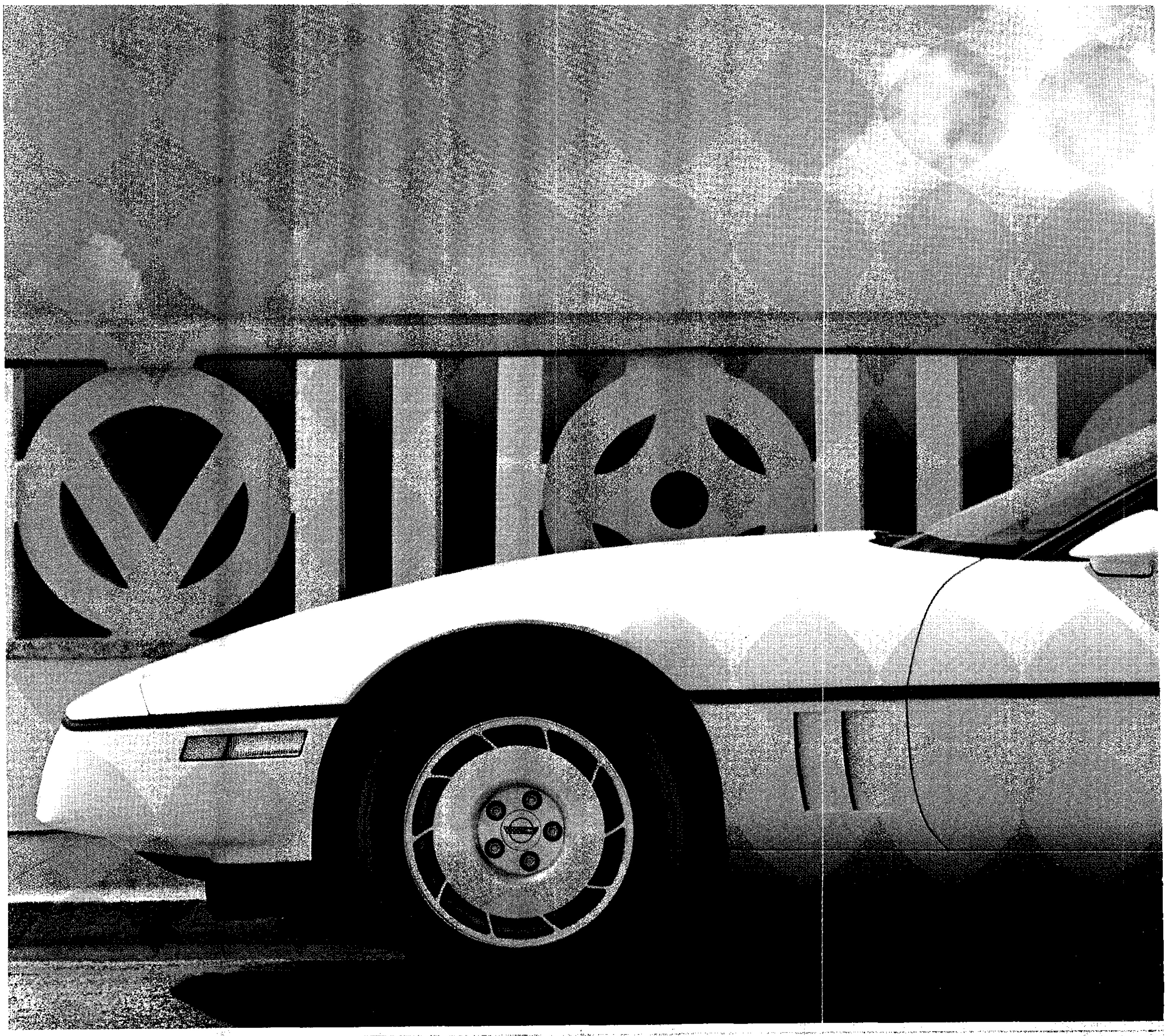

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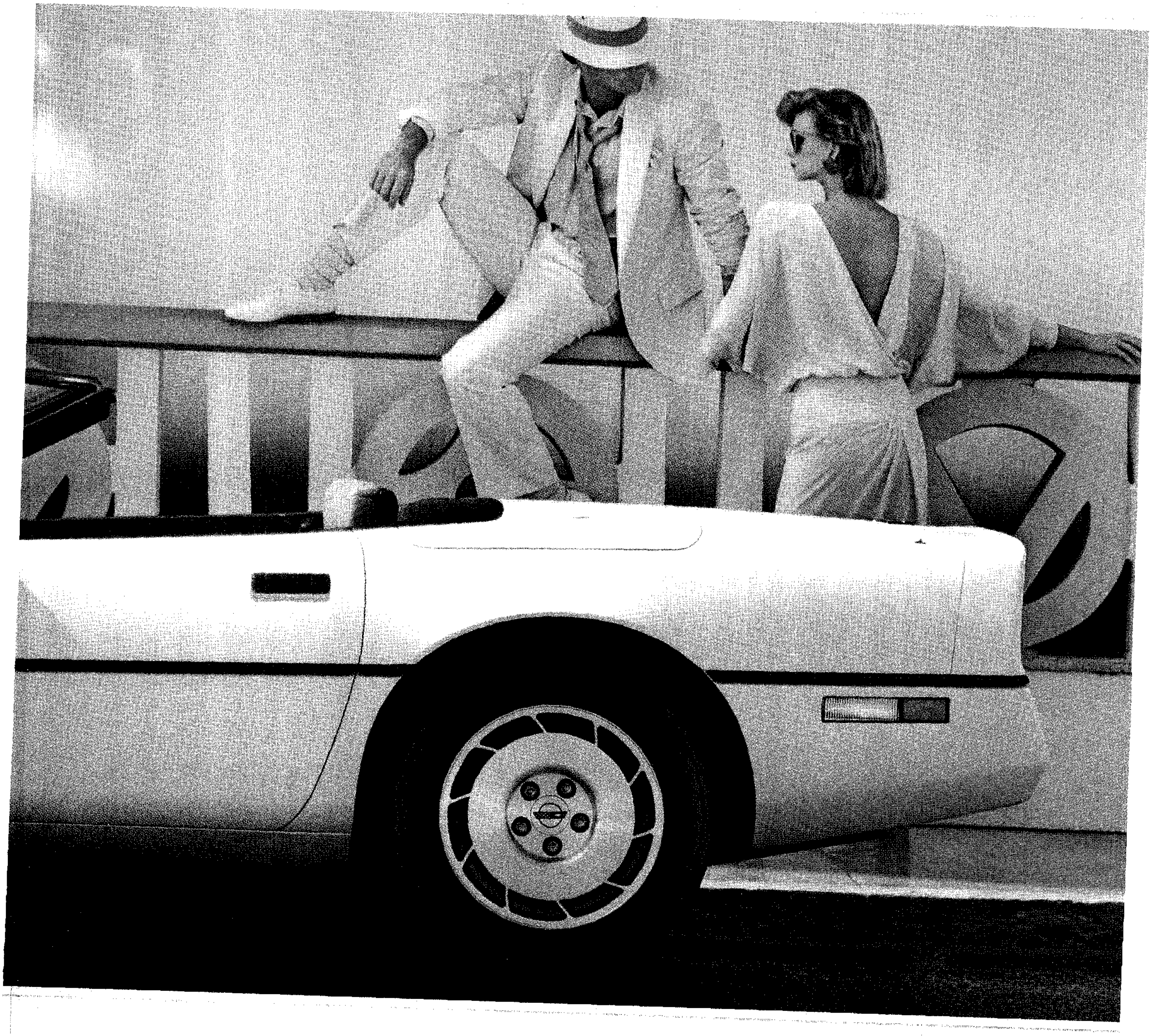
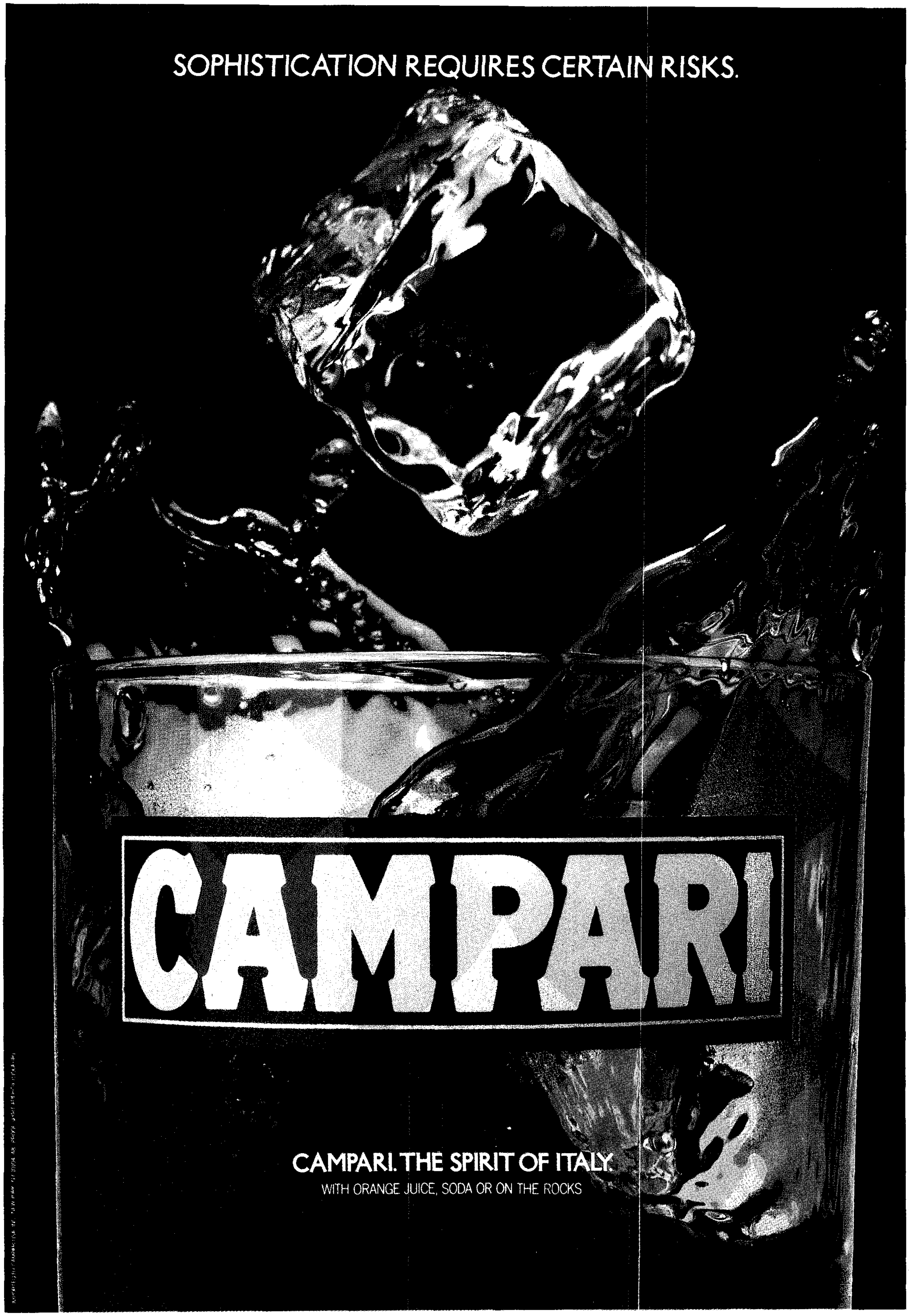




SOPHISTICATION REQUIRES CERTAIN RISKS.

CAMPARI

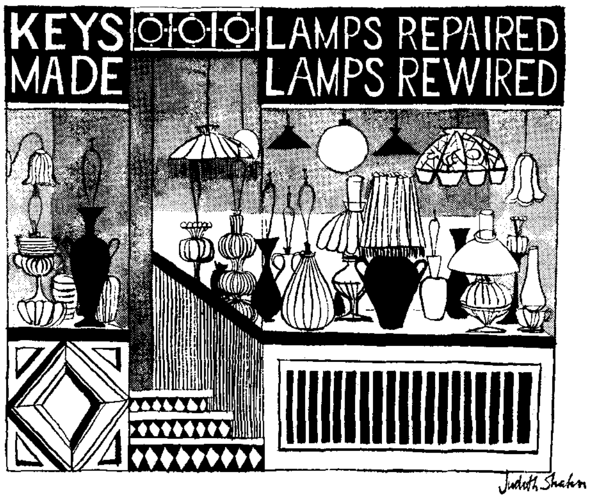
CAMPARI. THE SPIRIT OF ITALY.

WITH ORANGE JUICE, SODA OR ON THE ROCKS

work fashion at the bottom to form a floor, and then the work is left for a day or so to dry. When the seat has been fixed athwartships, the frame becomes less fragile, and can be unfastened from the table and turned over to receive the skin. “Then I’m away to the abattoir, to ask for a good big hide,” Eustace says. “I soak it in alum and saltpeter for a week in the tin bath. Then I stretch it over the coracle framework, tie it to the gunwale, and let it shrink in place.” The rope used for tying the coracle to a riverbank stake is sometimes made from the hair of horses’ tails, twisted together. Hides now cost thirty pounds or so each, and a rope requires eight or nine tails, at a pound apiece. So the hide coracles are much more costly to make than the calico version, which Eustace builds on the same rig—six or so a year, varying each one slightly to suit the size and weight of the purchaser. (Eustace’s 1984 price for a calico coracle was seventy pounds; his father charged two pounds ten shillings for one in 1935. The increase is less than that which has occurred in the price of many other things, such as a basic car.)

Help with construction is occasionally provided by a friend, Philip Barber, who has a regular job in a foundry. Eustace hopes that Philip, who is in his forties, may one day take over the coracle business from the last of the coracle-building Rogerses. “Without Philip, I’d be struggling,” he says. “He has a vehicle, so he’s able to take me to the abattoir. He goes to the timberyard to look for ash for the laths and for the looms of the paddles. I’ve shown him all I can.”

Eustace has a wider market for his coracles than any coracle-maker before him. Visitors come to Ironbridge from all over the world and are fascinated by what they see there. The commander of H.M.S. Dreadnought, the first British nuclear submarine, bought two of Eustace’s coracles, and a United States nuclear-sub commander bought one, which Eustace thinks may have travelled to the New World well underwater. A retired British Army general has one. Eustace’s coracles have gone to Israel, Norway, and Australia. (In the winters, he keeps busy making model coracles, a foot in diameter, which he presents as gifts, and two of these have gone to the Soviet Union with returning Russian tourists.) The Trader Vic’s restaurants bought two hide and twelve calico coracles a few years ago, and though Eustace appreciated the order he has had doubts about having supplied them. “They’re hung up for decoration,” he says. “They’ll never be used. It’s a shame. People there will never know what a good little vessel it is.”



PEOPLE come to the gorge and stare at the bridge. They walk across it. They stand in the middle and look down at the Severn passing beneath. The bridge is a spectacle and a goal. Eustace, who lives less than a hundred yards from the bridge and sees it constantly, in no way suffers from Eiffel Tower syndrome—living close by without ever having climbed it. He admires the bridge and often contemplates it, although, as it happens, the craft he practices predates that which created the bridge, and his forebears were on this spot before the bridge was: his great-great-grandfather Rogers was born in the Dip in 1778, the year before the iron bridge was built. I walk along the path with Eustace one day so that he can point out to me the grooves and notches in the bridge worn by the towing lines of barges. He indicates cracks in some of the cast-iron sections. “Many a time I’ve stood here and wondered how they fitted it all together,” he says. Eustace supports the school of thought which holds that despite the fact that the legend “Coalbrookdale 1779” is molded into the bridge, and despite some contemporary accounts of how it was made, the bridge was cast not at the foundries in the Coalbrookdale valley, a mile away, but right here, on the banks of the river. He says, “This was all Coalbrookdale then.”

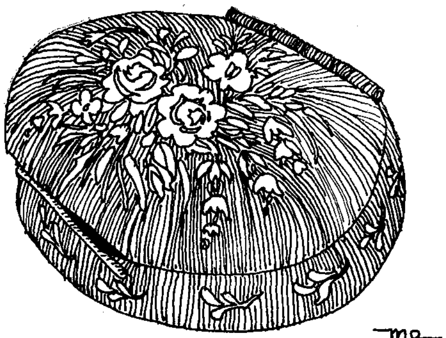
Not only was the bridge a technological wonder of its time; it also filled a local need. After 1750, with the expansion of the iron trade the area had experienced a boom. Cargoes of coal, iron, bricks, and clay had to be shipped up and down the river. More and more people had to cross the river to their places of work, and the nearest bridges were at Buildwas, upstream, and Bridgnorth, downstream. Both the amount of river traffic and the high sides of the gorge favored the building of a single-span bridge. In 1709, Abraham Darby had perfected the technique of smelting iron ore with coke, and since then cast iron, a relatively cheap, strong material for fireplaces and tools, had been made in the area. In the seventeen-seventies, a Shrewsbury architect, Thomas Pritchard, made designs for a cast-iron bridge which excited the interest of the prominent ironmasters John Wilkinson and Abraham Darby III, and it was the latter who, apparently amending Pritchard’s design, undertook the construction. Work proceeded cautiously, following traditional carpentry practice in some respects, with base plates held by dovetail joints, and uprights secured to the five main ribs by wedges; a greater amount of iron was used than was subsequently found to be needed in bridges of such dimensions. But this was the first. And it survived the great flood of February, 1795, which severely damaged every other bridge on the Severn. Thereafter, iron bridges were in fashion—and the original figured in the itinerary of visitors to Shropshire. The bridge was featured in many pictures of the gorge by artists of the Romantic age, which often showed the fires from the blast furnaces luridly illuminating the shaggy slopes above the river. However, the demands of twentieth-century traffic proved too much for the bridge. In 1909, a concrete bridge was built half a mile downstream and, being free while the iron bridge continued to demand tolls, attracted much of the traffic. In 1931, the iron bridge was closed to all vehicles; pedestrians could still walk across for a penny. In 1950, the toll was finally abolished. Much repair-and-restoration work was done in the early nineteen-seventies, and an inverted arch of concrete was constructed on the riverbed to prevent the bridge abutments from slowly sinking and moving toward one another. Eustace says, “This has stopped the abutments sliding together at about a tenth of an inch per year, but it may put the old ironwork under pressure." There are, he thinks, about sixty cracks in the iron sections; he examines them closely in his daily consideration of the landmark that is his close neighbor. He says, "I suppose it's only natural, when you've grown up with a thing so close, that it's a part of you. It hurts to see it damaged in any way. You feel protective about it. I was going to fetch my papers one evening a year or so ago, and I saw an American making a sketch of it. I said, 'What do you think to our bridge?' And he said, 'I'll tell you what I think. I think that when they built this bridge it was as great a feat as our men going to the moon.' "

Eustace's Uncle Jim worked in the Coalbrookdale ironworks most of his life but retired for a while to Canada, where his sisters lived. He came back to Ironbridge to die, and, in accordance with his wishes, his ashes were scattered on the Severn from the bridge.

IRONBRIDGE is one of half a dozen communities that have been incorporated in the new town of Telford. The center of Telford is laid out for the automobile age, with covered shopping malls, vast car parks, and a network of new roads leading to modern housing developments and also to the older villages. Ironbridge itself has become one of the sought-after places to live in the district, its artisans' houses and laborers' cottages being fixed up as homes for computer engineers and affluent retired folk. After its Industrial Revolution heyday, the place had a long decline, but it now manifests a renewed, if not completely satisfactory, prosperity, such as can overwhelm a spot that is pretty and quaint and whose associations with real work are mostly in the past. Hence tourist buses, school parties, crafts shops, and antique dealers, high heels *and* farm boots; yet there is still industrial smoke from the iron-casting works, and coal trucks still rumble down through Coalbrookdale to Buildwas power station.

Eustace is ambivalent about some of the changes that have occurred during his lifetime. Because Ironbridge no longer has an ironmonger's shop (it once had two such shops), he has to take a bus to Telford town center to buy nails and paint. Telford new town does not much appeal to him. "They've brought some of the worst buggers in the country here," he says. "It's terrible for vandalism—you leave a car in one of those car parks overnight and they'll have the wheels off." He blames "young yobbos from Telford" for the theft of one of his ferrets a year ago. Nevertheless, he recognizes the need to revitalize the district, and Ironbridge in particular. "It was an ideal spot, this, for the birth of industry," he says. "They'd got everything they needed—the right minerals, and little brooks racing down to drive their bellows and water hammers. When I was going to school, there were brick- and tileworks, china factories, foundries for rainwater pipes and gutters and fire grates. Then, in the years between the wars, housing construction slowed down and many of those things weren't needed so much. The Coalport china works moved to Stoke, where they'd been getting their clay. The working population moved out of Ironbridge, up to Madeley, and Telford happened, and the heart went out of this place. Shops were empty. Here in the Dip, there used to be sixty living. Now there's twelve."

In 1967, the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust was set up, and six years later it opened its first historic site, at Blists Hill, about two miles downriver from the bridge. Now the old furnaces, warehouses, china kilns, steam engines, and canal machinery form a dispersed museum for the early industrial age, attracting some quarter of a million paying visitors a year and probably as many again who don't enter the exhibits but wander outside and enjoy the gorge scenery, eat and drink in the local cafés and pubs, and buy postcards and souvenirs, among which are ashtrays—floridly colored—with a central picture of Eustace in a coracle. Ironbridge does well out of the trade but grumbles about the invasion. Local feeling about some of the improvements taking place was nicely put a few years ago in a letter to the *Shropshire Star*, a daily published in Telford, by a woman named Mary Bloomfield, from the nearby village of Eaton Constantine:

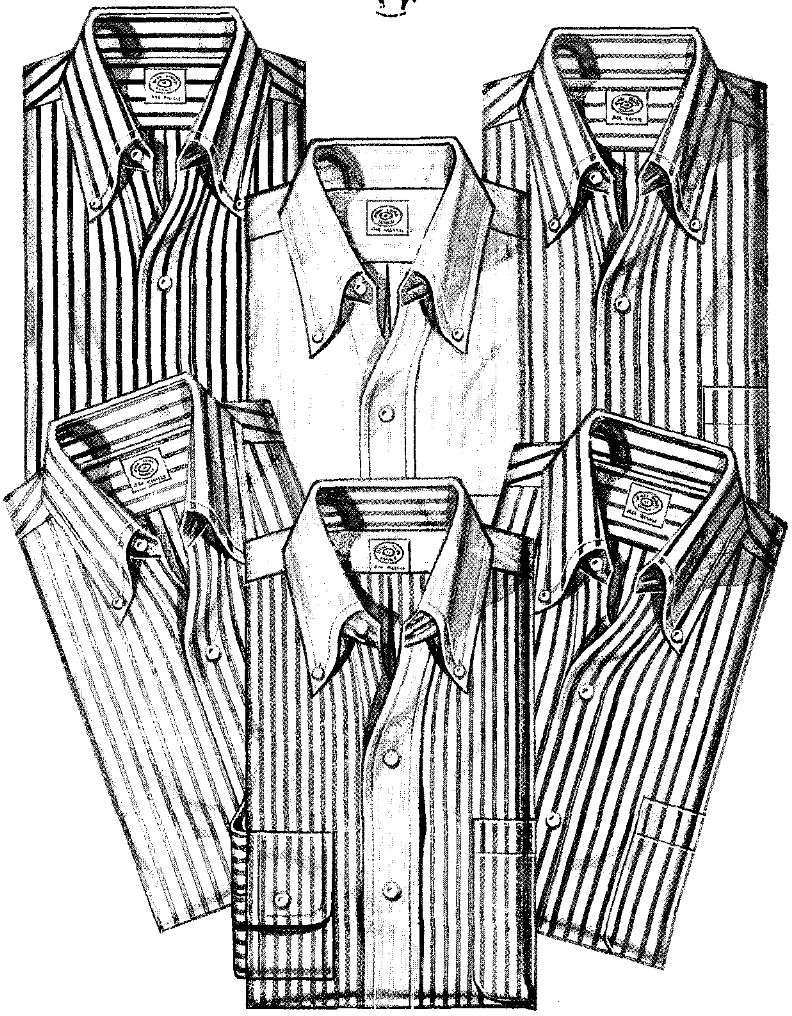


> This area was once inhabited by others like Jim Rogers, people who loved it in its wild and natural state. The dilapidation of its buildings was hidden by vigorous, verdant loveliness. Who cared about the state of the buildings when they could feast their eyes on Benthall Edge, the Rotunda, and the Severn flowing as from time immemorial between them?
>
> When Mr. Neil Cossons and others involved in the museum at "Blesses Hill" wonder why the "locals" are lacking in enthusiasm for their efforts, perhaps this is one reason. It is no longer home, and its children have gone elsewhere to live, because there is no point in staying. So few are the familiar faces in the streets and shops, we are now the strangers . . .

Eustace sympathizes with this point of view but also partly disagrees with it. "To my way of thinking, the museum rescued this place," he says. "It's not exactly how we'd like it to be, I know, and it's not the way things were, but, as I've said to many, what stage would it have reached without the museum? It would have gone right to the bottom." Ironbridge may not be perfect, but Eustace still agrees with his father, who used to say, "I haven't seen anywhere I'd swap for this."

AT seventy-one, Eustace is no longer an early riser, especially in winter. But he has his morning chores to do. He gets his own breakfast, and also a bite to eat at lunchtime, and goes daily to his sister's house in the Dip for "tea"—his evening meal. Shopping in Ironbridge, he calls at Tim Eley's butcher shop, where the pork pies are still made on the premises, and goes to the post office for a money order to include with his weekly entry for the football pools. In the late afternoon, on his way to get the evening paper, he calls in on the woman at the antique shop to see if she wants one, too. He reads the *Daily Mirror*—a tabloid that has traditionally supported the Labour Party—in the morning, and the *Shropshire Star* in the evenings. He generally completes the *Mirror's* crossword and cryptic puzzles, and sometimes clips items from its "Old Codgers" feature, which prints questions and answers about old gadgets and customs, such as the date when mantraps, for catching poachers, were made illegal—the answer being 1827, though they were still occasionally used after that. He has lived alone since the death of his mother, in 1967, but he isn't lonely. If reference is made to the fact that he has never married, he repeats the ad-age "Anyone who knew me wouldn't have me," or, still hiding slightly within the camouflage of quotation, says, "My dad used to say, 'Stay single and bring thee kids up the same.'" Old friends often drop in, sometimes with cakes made by their wives, and sit chatting by the fire with a pot of tea. They talk about the good fields for rabbits, and the time the ice was five inches thick on the Severn outside the power-station intakes, and the wars between poachers and landowners. Eustace reads aloud to them from his books and documents. He reads slowly but precisely, having no difficulty with obscure words or complicated constructions. He says that he didn't put pen to paper from the time he left school until the war, when a friend went into the Army and Eustace wrote to him. He himself, as a skilled farm worker, wasn't called up, but he volunteered for the Home Guard. "I wasn't very regular in attending," he says. "I had this letter telling me to report, and I went along, bloody terrified. The captain told me they had decided to put me in the Intelligence section. Then he asked why I hadn't turned up recently. I said, 'The harvest.' He said, 'Then get back to it and get the harvest in.' That was my last Home Guard appearance."

Although Eustace denounces hooligans and vandals, he thinks that some of them may have been driven to anti-social behavior by their blank lives; he is not at all sympathetic to Mrs. Thatcher's Government, which strikes him as not caring for the needs of many of the people. "I've worked for this lot who are in power now. I had no choice but to work. And I know: they want you *down there*. Take Mr. Drury, the farmer I worked for—I admired him, and he admired me, but he didn't want me to change my station in life. Well, it pleases me when a workingman can buy his own house and have a seaside holiday. I never wanted a car, though I could have had one, but I've wanted it for others. It upsets me that there's bloody millionaires thinking about how to make another million and not much about the people whose work goes into making it. There have been some improvements, I know. A man out of work today is in some ways better off than a workingman in the nineteen-thirties. Then you could be living from day to day even if you had a job. A man I knew at the Dale works said to me, 'We were paid on Friday, we



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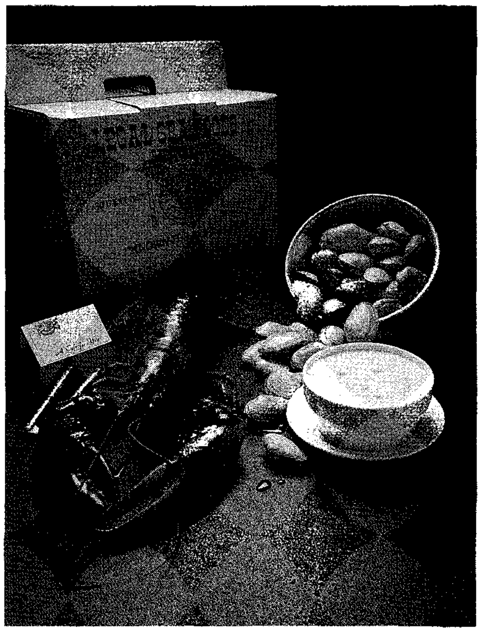

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were ready for payday again by Sunday.' I've worked alongside men who had wives and children and lived in tied cottages, owned by the farmers, and were terrified of losing their jobs, which meant losing their homes. What I've noticed is, when the workingman's doing well, the country is doing well. The workingman who is decently off wants to improve his home—he spends his money on carpets and paint. It keeps things going. The spending makes work. But this lot don't seem to understand. I don't know where we'd have been without that North Sea oil. You'd have been able to count our ribs without that oil."

Eustace is not complaining about his own life, which seems to him to have been unbeatable—full of hard work and essentially independent. "I say I haven't been anywhere on holiday, and my mates reply, 'Your life has been one long bloody holiday.' It's been a life of experiences. I've never had a moment when I couldn't occupy myself by going out in a coracle, on a bike, or on foot." On Saturday afternoons, he sometimes walks to farms where he and his father used to go rabbiting, and admires the woods and fields. "When you've grown up as a countryman, you look at a tree and think, That's a fine oak, or, What a lovely beech. You glance at a field and say to yourself, 'That's a nice crop of swedes.' You know the name of what you're looking at—though don't think for a moment you know everything about it. If you thought that, you'd be fooling yourself." On these jaunts, Eustace keeps an eye out for willow and ash, useful for coracle-making and for walking sticks, which—along with the model coracles—he fashions during the winter months. Occasionally, he will assist in "brushing" a hedge. He recently helped a friend cut back a hawthorn hedge that hadn't been dealt with in fifty years, and got out of the job two winters' supply of firewood. He works hard on his own garden, mowing and rolling the lawns, trimming the topiary and hedges, digging in the vegetable patch where the cabbages, which should have been ready to pick by now, have been held up by cold weather. His friends say that he doesn't seem to have aged in the last fifteen years, but that he is less shy: when he used to see strangers approaching the shed, he would sometimes retreat to the house. He would still rather talk about his grandfather and father than about himself, but he is forthcoming about coracles, especially to the frequent parties of schoolchildren. After school visits, he receives sheaves of illustrated thank-you letters and folders of drawings, perhaps with a crayoned title like "A Special Book for Mr. Rogers." The drawings generally feature the iron bridge and Eustace in a coracle. He may have learned that reticence, if it is not to draw attention to itself, involves being able to let yourself go a bit.

On weekday evenings, Eustace watches sports on television or reads "gunslingers"—paperback Westerns. At weekends, he generally spends the evenings out. His grandfather was a rip-roaring drinker, his father abstemious. "My dad had Severn water in his veins," he says, as if that made alcohol unnecessary. On Saturday nights, Eustace, who likes a pint or two, goes with a few friends to a pub or a social club in one village or another not far from Ironbridge. On Friday nights during the winter, he is generally to be found with the Tontine domino team, either at the Tontine or at a pub they have gone to for an away match. On the sideboard in one of the front rooms, there are many trophies for winning dominoes matches. Eustace says modestly, "There's a saying, 'There's no champion at dominoes'—but we've had a fair team over the years." Robin Long, the manager of the Tontine, though he praises the Tontine team, is somewhat bemused by their earnestness. "You'd think they were playing chess," he says. "It seems to me that if you have five dominoes and only one will go, you have to play it."

ON the last morning of my stay, I ran into Eustace in the market square near the Tontine and strolled with him down to his house. On the way, an acquaintance hailed him: "How are you, then, Eustace?"

"Not so good—the back," said Eustace.

"What've you been doing, then?"

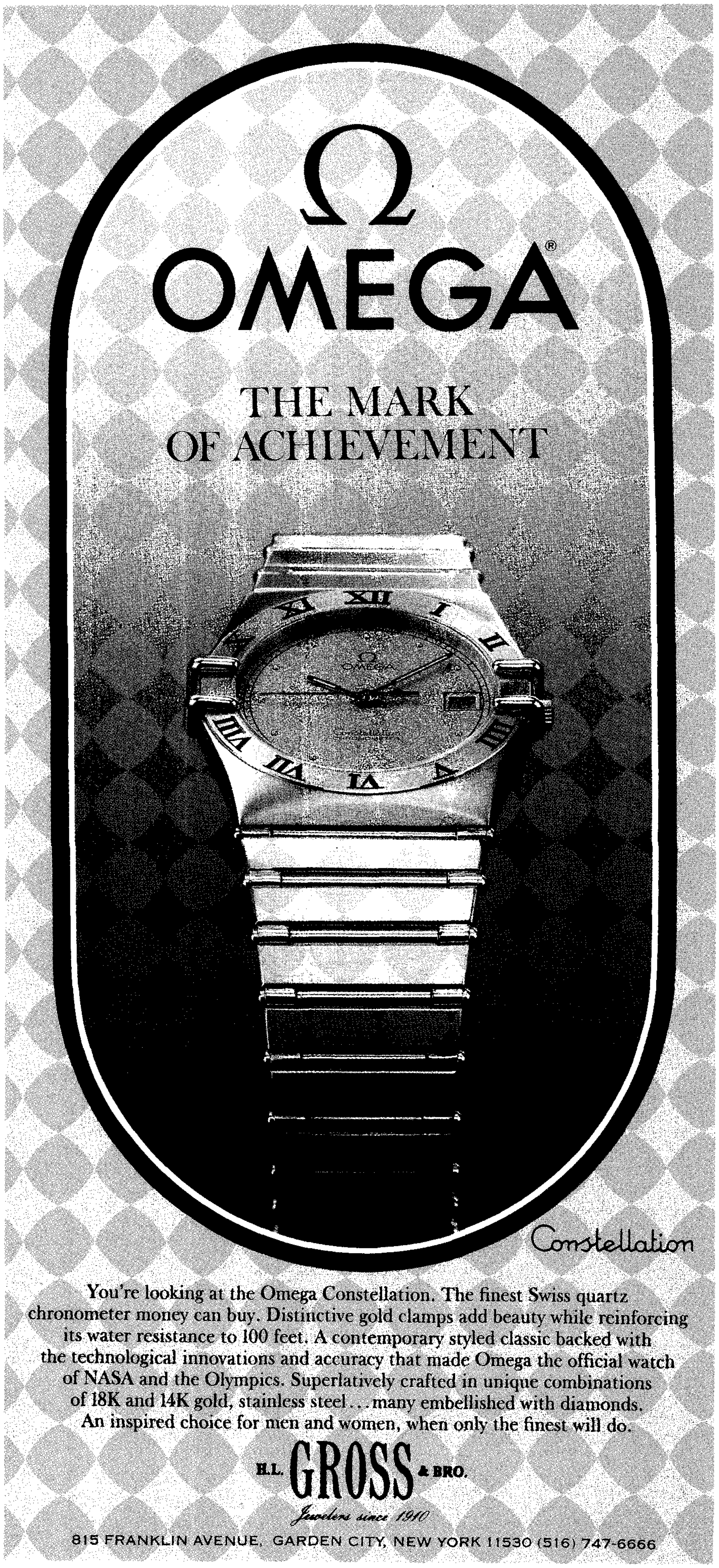
"Nothing."

Eustace turned to me as we walked on, and said, "You don't have to be doing anything special for a back to come on."

I agreed. My back once went when I was lifting a toothbrush to my teeth.

"I remember my father getting out of a coracle after his back let go," Eustace continued. He grimaced as if the pain had been his.

Eustace and I had been talking obliquely about a voyage I wanted to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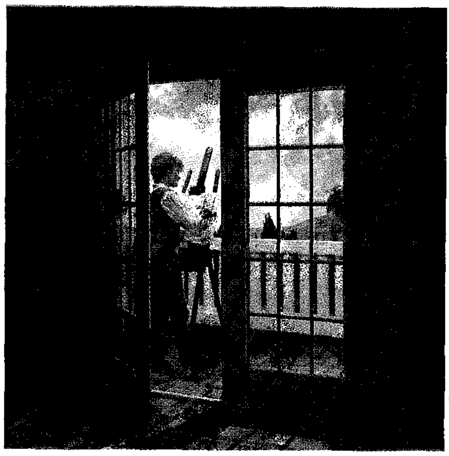

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make on the Severn in my coracle. He had mentioned various problems I might face with weirs, floodwaters, rapids, and power-station inlets. Now he said, "The trouble with a longer voyage is the sitting—it's hard on the back." In his own case, he attributes his lumbar pains mostly to a life on the land: few farm workers escape back problems, what with the humping of hay and straw, cattle feed and manure, and the making of stacks and the moving of milk churns. In his case, too, there was often the carrying home at night of a string of twenty rabbits over his shoulders—a weight of seventy pounds or so.

When we reached the shed, Eustace asked, "Shall I show you how I handle the coracle?" Despite his morning back, he brought a calico-covered one out from the shed. "This is my own, a fraction smaller than yours," he said. He looked like a large mushroom walking as he carried it over his head down the steep slope to where he has an open, boxlike raft lying against the bank, held by chains that allow it to rise and fall with the level of the river.

The Severn was running strongly. Several ducks bore witness to this, swimming slowly across the current while being whisked downstream. "Everything is tricky about handling the coracle," Eustace said, after he dropped it into the water alongside the raft and was holding it in place with the blade of his paddle. "My old man didn't mind tumbling in. If he upset and was in deep water where he could get no footing, he'd rock his way in over the seat. I've seen him standing with his feet on the gunwale, one on each side, paddling from up there. I've never gone in for the acrobatics." Very smoothly, Eustace bent and held the thwart of the coracle with one hand while with the other he pressed the paddle inside the raised edge of the raft, keeping the coracle hard against the raft. He stepped in, sat down, and was off upstream, toward the bridge, at surprising speed, given that the water he was moving over was going the other way. He sat with his black boots planted a foot or so apart, pointing straight forward. He leaned forward slightly, his left shoulder higher than his right, holding the top of the paddle with his left hand while with the right he held the loom about a third of the way toward the blade, and stirred the water as easily as one might stir a cup of tea. Then he spun and went out into midstream, paddling one-armed now—the way coracle men navigated

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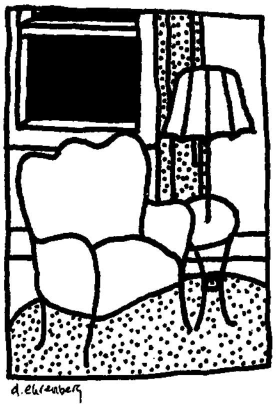
when they were laying eel lines or working a net—with the loom of the paddle pressed against the inside of his right arm, making the paddle almost an extension of the arm. In midstream, he returned to the two-handed grip, tackling for a moment the full strength of the current, slicing the blade to one side and then to the other in graceful arcs, the end of each arc taking the form of a little flick to the rear before the paddle—not leaving the water—swished forward and to the other side again. Twin whirlpools appeared and passed down either side of the coracle. Eustace darted once more across the river and then returned. As he climbed out onto the raft, he said, "You'll need to get lots of practice before you go on Severn."

I EARMARKED a week in mid-May for my maiden voyage down the Severn; that would give me enough time for the practice that Eustace recommended. My plan was to go from Shrewsbury to Ironbridge—a river distance of roughly twenty-one miles, and a three-day trip, if all went well. Margot would make the same trip, only in the car. In early May, I began to keep a more than usually interested eye on the weather charts in newspapers and on television. British weather is generally dominated by lows—depressions moving in sequence across the Atlantic, bringing rain, low clouds, and, if we're lucky, fitful sunny periods to illuminate our lush green grass. Now and again, however, the Azores high-pressure zone will swell out to embrace us, or part of it will seem to break off and squat unmoving for several splendid days, or perhaps weeks, over these islands, while the sun shines and shines. What weather for a Severn voyage that would make! More specifically—according to the lore of the Rogerses—I needed days when rain had not been teeming down in North Wales, provoking a Severn spate. A few days before Margot and I were to set out from London, we discovered that the forecast for the coming week was uncertain; still, we were determined to go. On Sunday night, I called Robin Long at the Tontine (Eustace does not have a phone), and was somewhat reassured by his report that the Severn was "quite low and stable." On Monday morning, however, as we drove north out of the city, with the coracle lashed to the roof, our headlights were on, and heavy rain was falling, to the accompaniment of a thick easterly gale. One bright note was that the rain was said to be coming down in diminished quantities in Wales.

Shrewsbury, a Shropshire town famous for its medieval and Tudor buildings, turned out to be full of visitors for the annual West Midlands Agricultural Show. The hotels were jammed, but we eventually found a room in a small guesthouse. During an uneasy night, there were moments when, asleep or awake, I had visions of a surging, tumultuous river. I was up early the next morning—it was overcast but not raining or blowing—and tried to limber up with a walk along the riverfront. The Severn loops around the center of Shrewsbury, almost making an island of it; a long stretch of the river is lined with parks and public gardens, furnishing a number of points where coracle-launching looked possible. The water seemed calm and not particularly fast-moving—so I thought at first. I walked under a railway bridge, still following the river, and saw Shrewsbury station and Shrewsbury castle on the slopes above, and heard, ahead, a steady roar that had nothing to do with trains. As the river passed around a long bend, it now appeared to be moving at far greater speed, and I came to the cause of the sound: a weir, spanning the river, over which the waters of the Severn fell in a loud, constant cadence. It was a fall of three or four feet, perhaps—no Niagara, but even so I found it difficult to imagine going over that smooth and glistening chute in a coracle.



We launched my basket craft an hour later, about half a mile farther on. Castle Fields was the spot—a municipal open space past which the river flowed, with suburban houses standing above the far bank, and a small island just downstream dividing the Severn's waters. Here the noise from the weir was a muted rumble. We launched at a place where the grassy bank shelved gently to a muddy foreshore. I was wearing calf-high rubber seaboots, corduroys, a long-sleeved shirt, a sweater, a beret, and a thin, waistcoat-type life jacket. Tied beneath the thwart was a small waterproof bag containing a piece of calico, a tube of bitumen cement, a clasp knife, a pocket compass, a one-and-a-quarter-inch-to-the-mile map put out by the Ordnance Survey, a notebook, a pen, a can of beer, and a bar of chocolate. My orange foul-weather jacket lay behind the thwart; the morning, at ten o'clock, remained misty. I lowered the coracle into water just deep enough so that it wouldn't ground as my weight went into it. Margot held a line I had made fast to the coracle's gunwale, and I pressed the blade of the paddle into the river bottom just beyond the coracle, so that it would not slide away. Crouching low, I stepped in, and seated myself on the very middle of the thwart, wondering whether my back would hold out till I reached my destination for the day—Atcham, a village almost seven miles downriver. "See you in Atcham in a few hours, I hope," I said to Margot, who was planning to drive there and paint watercolors at a spot where the map showed a bridge crossing the Severn and a hotel called the Mytton & Mermaid stands—a possible roof for the night.

The moment of letting go was similar, I imagine, to the way it is with a hot-air balloon. The coracle swayed and bobbed and was lifted off on the current: not snatched, not thrust—the movement was immensely natural and easy. The river was not moving as fast as I had feared. Margot strolled along, keeping abreast of me, until she came to the end of Castle Fields, and there she waved goodbye. I worked the paddle strenuously, concentrating on keeping the coracle heading in the right direction and more or less in midstream. I could tell how fast I was going through the water—as opposed to with it—by looking at flecks of May blossom and brown-white bubbles of foam that were floating downriver. For the moment, I had the pleasant feeling of sharing the same buoyant, liberal element as the blossom, the bubbles, and a pair of ducks sidling across the river. The Severn banks here were from twelve to fifteen feet high, partly grassed, partly bare earth; hedges angled toward the tops of the banks, where small willows and other tenuous shrubbery grew. My chief vista lay ahead, where a modern road bridge hovered in the distance. The traffic passing over it struck me as absurd—perversely out of place. As I

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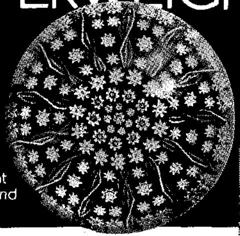

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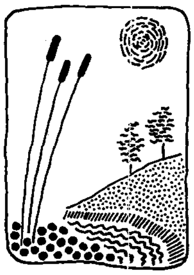
approached the bridge, a small boy on a bicycle, going across, saw me and stopped. He leaned over the rail and waved, calling down, " 'Ow far 'ave you been?"

"Not far," I answered truthfully—and I didn't like to say how far I meant to go.

I passed under the deep shadows of the bridge, doing some agile sculling to avoid water dripping from a pipe suspended beneath it.



The ordnance map told me that the river passed through the northern suburbs of Shrewsbury but, with the bridge behind, my outlook was entirely rural: cows on the right bank, some of whom paused amid their chewing to glance phlegmatically at me; a few anglers, who gave me slightly unbelieving stares and then rather suspicious nods or waves in reply to my greetings; birds in the trees and bushes making a constant susurrus of chitter, tweet, and chirp. Another background sound was that of water running in through numerous gullies and sluices in the banks. About half an hour after my departure, I reckoned from the map that I had covered a mile; this did not seem substantial. I took longer spells at sculling, and pretty soon I was doing it without thinking about it—no longer looking at the blade as I moved it in the water. The coracle wriggled forward, shimmying in a short arc—in clockface terms, between eleven and one o'clock. When I paused, resting the paddle across the rim and putting up one foot and then the other in a restricted stretch, the coracle revolved slowly; it provided a handier means of seeing in all directions than a canoe or a rowboat would have done. If I let it drift too long, however, it tended toward a bank, one of the river's immutable laws apparently being that sooner or later everything that floated on it would collide with one edge or the other. What wind there was seemed to be mostly astern, though the long, sinuous bends sometimes brought it abeam. I recalled old wisdom about rivers—for instance, that the water moves fastest, and is deepest, on the outside of a bend. Although the sky was still gray, sun behind the mist was beginning to warm the day. Another island divided the river, and just before I reached it the water became shallow and bubbly. The coracle had only about three inches of freeboard in front and four inches on the sides, so any disturbance on the surface of the water looked threatening—a four-inch wave could be disastrous. But we bounced through the choppy patch. I followed a sequence of little vortices into calmer water. Four swans swam ahead of me, now and then turning to spread their wings, as if to let me know they were decidedly there, but then, not yet seeking a showdown, swimming on.

When I had been going about an hour and a half and was beginning to feel the need to stand straight, I came round the top of a large U bend and saw several houses, a church tower, and a barn beside the river. This was the hamlet of Uffington. Two women were standing on a lawn that came to the riverbank, waving—I realized—at me. One called out, "Perhaps you would like to land here. Your wife said to look out for you."

I clambered stiffly ashore, and slowly unbent. I tied the coracle to a stake. Margot, it seemed, had driven here, walked down a footpath to the river, found this house, and told its astonished but hospitable owner, Mrs. Brereton, and her friend, who was visiting from Australia, that I was coming by in a coracle. Margot had then driven on to Atcham. Mrs. Brereton was amazed by the coracle; she said she hadn't seen one in Uffington for ten years or so. I declined a plate of bacon, sausages, eggs, and fried bread but accepted, gratefully, a cup of coffee. The three of us talked for twenty minutes about coracles and about Australia, and then I gave them my thanks and made my departure. My back felt restored; in fact, despite Eustace's warnings, it seemed remarkably improved by coracling.

The river's course was now southward, though still sinuously so. Near a bridge that carries a railway from Shrewsbury to Wellington, two boys, maybe eleven years old, were on the riverside path below an extensive field. One called out, very politely, "Excuse me, what's that you're in?"

"A coracle," I said.

"A coracle?"

"Yes."

"Oh. Ta."

Below the bridge, I passed a floating orange life buoy marked "Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council"—thrown in, I concluded (perhaps unfairly), not to a swimmer in peril but for fun, by a youth feeling anti-social.

The river was generally free of contemporary flotsam—plastic bottles, chunks of plastic foam, and the like. Here, at ten to one, a light rain began to fall. A bit farther on, the river began to speed up again. Suddenly, I could see the bottom, less than a foot down: stones appeared, and long green strands of underwater plants billowed downstream. Another realization: the river ran fastest in the shallow stretches, more slowly in the long, deep pools. Here I would need my wits about me. Not far ahead, the Severn foamed and crinkled, and an angler stood nearly halfway across the river, with the water up to calf level on his gray-green rubber waders. Snags and rocks were apparent. This was Preston Boats, where there used to be a ferry and, until 1910, a fish weir spanning the Severn—a palisade of oak piles and wattles, from which eel lines were operated. Barges were hauled up a gutter, or channel, behind the man-made island near the right bank. I had to make a quick decision. I aimed for the part of the old weir where the water looked smoothest, just about reached it, bumped slightly, felt a small splash come aboard, and was then over it and abruptly in a back eddy, which took a good deal of paddle work to get out of. I had been too occupied to greet the angler, and he looked startled as I came bouncing past.

I also surprised two horses. They were a handsome pair—one black, one chestnut—and they cantered the length of a long field, following me. Across the river, sheep baaed as I passed. Duck and moorhen scurried to either side, and swallows zoomed over. The river sauntered again, and I sculled rhythmically. But it was a long last hour to Atcham, which I was hoping to reach before the bar and kitchen of the hotel closed, at 3 P.M. The noise of traffic indicated that the river was coming close to the main road from Shrewsbury to Wellington. I could see the tops of big trucks behind trees and bushes along the right bank. And at last I glimpsed the Atcham road bridge, where the river makes a right-angle bend. Thoughts of landfall overwhelmed me, but they were premature—the river was accelerating again. It broke into two streams, the narrower of which funnelled behind an island ahead of me, the broader flow heading more directly for the bridge. I picked the broader stream, and picked wrongly: the coracle bucked, crunched, and came to a halt. The gravel bottom was a few

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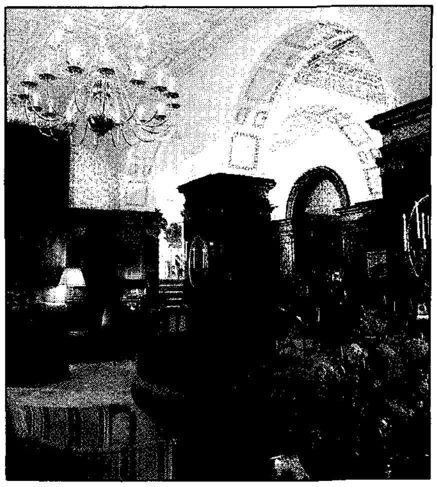

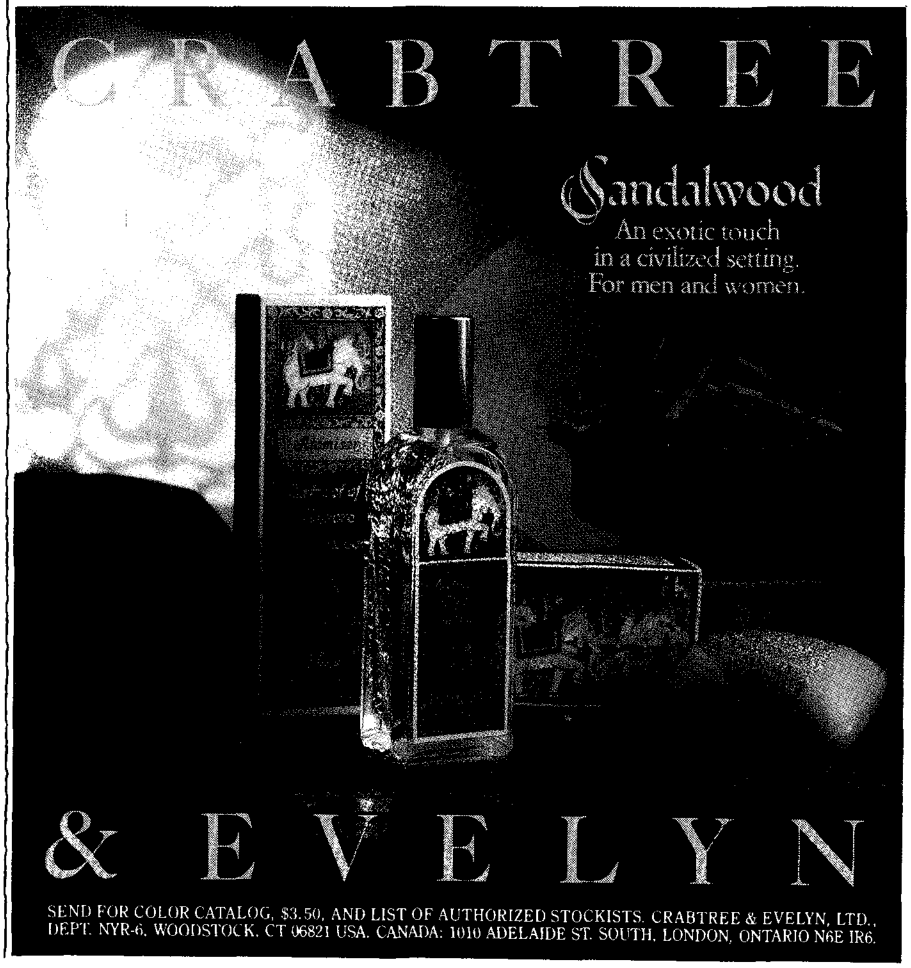

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inches below the surface. I put one boot over and transferred a little of my weight out of the coracle. It bumped forward a few feet and came to a solid stop. I had to step out altogether and wade for several yards, towing the coracle, and reboard when I judged that there was enough water to float again—a point reached when the Severn was brimming close to the top of my boots. Away once more, I headed for the far, Atcham end of the bridge.

There are actually two bridges, side by side, at Atcham: first, the one I could see from upstream, a utilitarian modern structure carrying the traffic, and then, right next to it, the old Atcham bridge, which is now just used by walkers and anglers—an elegant seven-arched Georgian stone construction, designed by John Gwynne, of Shrewsbury (who also built Magdalen Bridge in Oxford). As I paddled through the second arch, I saw Margot standing on the right bank, painting. She hadn't seen me yet. I headed for the tall, muddy bank opposite, which fronts the garden of the Mytton & Mermaid Hotel, between the old bridge and St. Eata's Church. I made fast to an ancient cast-iron mooring post; in the course of scaling the bank, I slithered and fell twice. When Margot noticed me, she came over, and together we hauled the coracle up onto the lawn. Then we repaired to the saloon bar in time for a late lunch of beer and sandwiches.

Atcham consists of a score of buildings—mostly houses and a few farms, but also a notable mansion and church. The mansion, Attingham Hall, is a great eighteenth-century country house, set in parkland, with a gate lodge just across the main road from the Mytton & Mermaid. The church, St. Eata's, is, according to the Shropshire volume of Nikolaus Pevsner's "The Buildings of England," the only church in Britain dedicated to that saint, who was, Bede says, "one of the gentlest and simplest of men." As for the Mytton & Mermaid, it is a lofty Georgian house that was once called the Talbot; the mermaid was added to the name by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, the noted architect who restored the inn, and if a mermaid had swum up the Severn she might well have figured in the life of Jack Mytton, a local rake, who on one occasion, for a wager, rode a bear into the hotel. Mytton was a passionate huntsman and was said to drink as many as half a dozen bottles of port a day; he died in prison in 1835, at the age of thirty-eight, and three thousand people went to his funeral. Two coracles were among the fishing gear he had owned, and were auctioned after his death. Although the Mytton & Mermaid was accommodating some of Shrewsbury's agricultural-show overspill, we were able to get a comfortable room there. In the late afternoon, when I had recovered from the morning's exercise, Margot and I drove to Wroxeter, five minutes by car—a hamlet where several fields near the Severn have been excavated to reveal some of the ruins of the Roman city of Viroconium, or Uricon, the capital of the province of Britannia Secunda and, in its heyday, circa 250 A.D., the fourth-largest city in the British Isles. A fine rain was falling on the green turf that has replaced the ancient paths and roads between ancient foundations, exposed hypocausts, the floors of the baths, and the bases of sixteen stone pillars (once part of the forum), and that covers the ground alongside a still standing section of rough wall, which is believed to have been part of the municipal granary. Viroconium was abandoned in 410 A.D., when the legions withdrew, and in Anglo-Saxon times it provided ready-to-hand building material for the growing settlement of Shrewsbury. Sheep grazed over what had been the forum. A few miles to the east, the horizon rose in an abrupt upheaving—a hill, looking like a great sleeping beast, that is called the Wrekin (a name derived from a British version of Viroconium). A. E. Housman was here, presumably on an autumn day, and wrote the poem in "A Shropshire Lad" that begins:

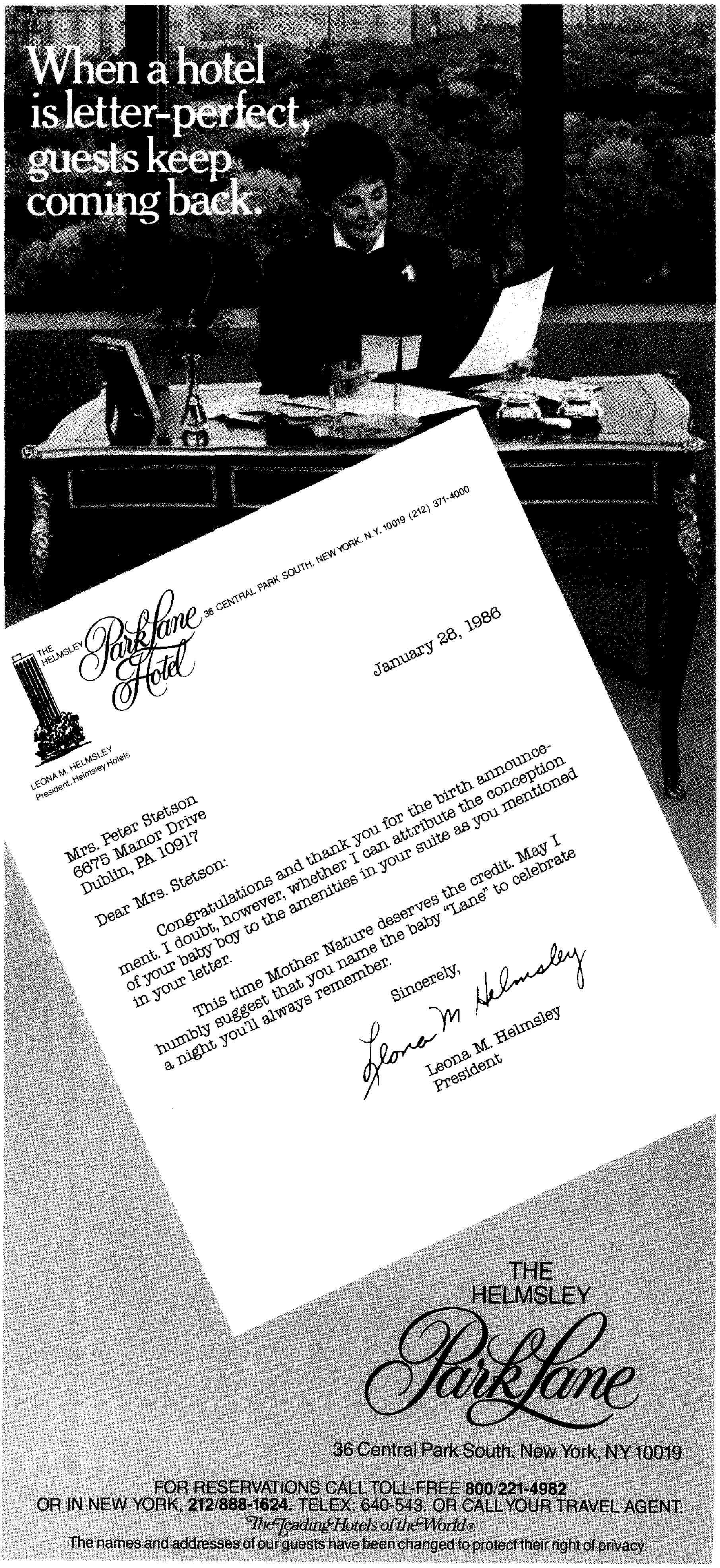
On Wenlock Edge the wood's in trouble;
His forest fleece the Wrekin heaves;
The gale, it plies the saplings double,
And thick on Severn snow the leaves.

'Twould blow like this through holt and hanger
When Uricon the city stood:
'Tis the old wind in the old anger,
But then it threshed another wood.

TWO days of rain had got the Severn moving fast next morning across the shallows below the Atcham bridges. Nevertheless, the anglers were up early in quest of the elusive salmon; several stood out on the shoal, with their lines cast into the pool, and one elderly man sat on a primitive two-legged, stool planted in the bank where the graveyard of St. Eata's came to the river's edge. He walked over to watch me prepare the coracle for launching, and perhaps to see if I had a salmon net aboard. He had fished here for forty years, he said, and had never seen a coracle—was thrilled to see one, and wanted to know how to work it.

It was a finer day than the day before, already warmer, but with a blustery south wind. I hoped to get to Cressage, eight miles on, and to a hotel called the Old Hall, where Margot meant to meet me. After I got out of the rapid current below Atcham, I had some hard paddling dead to windward. I felt the gaze of the anglers on my back and couldn't disappoint them. You might think that the current would carry one forward despite a headwind, but this is not the case: a coracle's grip on the water is so slight that it rides along like a piece of fluff and can be blown back over the current, especially when it is furnished with the extra windage of a person in it. I crouched as low as I could and still wield the paddle. I tried a variety of techniques that I had worked out the day before—particularly a shorter, sharper sculling stroke, twisting the paddle over the bow so that it acted more like a propeller, rotating one way and then the other. But once I was out of view of the anglers I sought the right bank and held on to a willow bough for a few minutes to get my breath back. Some of the new green leaves of the willow were underwater—evidence of a higher Severn. A group of swans—perhaps the same as yesterday's—was doing better than I at making progress downstream.

An eastward reach came next, however, and rewarded my labors. I stayed in the lee of the right bank, and the wind, on the beam, was mostly in my hair. For a while, the river narrowed and the pace of the current increased. I aimed for the smooth areas of the swirling water ahead. With the chance to spin round at the flick of the paddle, I saw behind me up on a ridge a fine Regency house: white stucco, and with a domed black roof on a tower section (the sort of house that one covets in *Country Life* advertisements). Cronkhill was its name, according to the indispensable ordnance map. Ahead, as I continued spinning, I glimpsed the Wrekin for the first time from the river; the sun—at exactly 11 A.M.—began to appear. But these benefits were immediately countered by the wind as I came into a short north-south stretch, where I found I could make no progress whatever. I was blown backward faster than I could impel the coracle forward. I made for the left bank, hooked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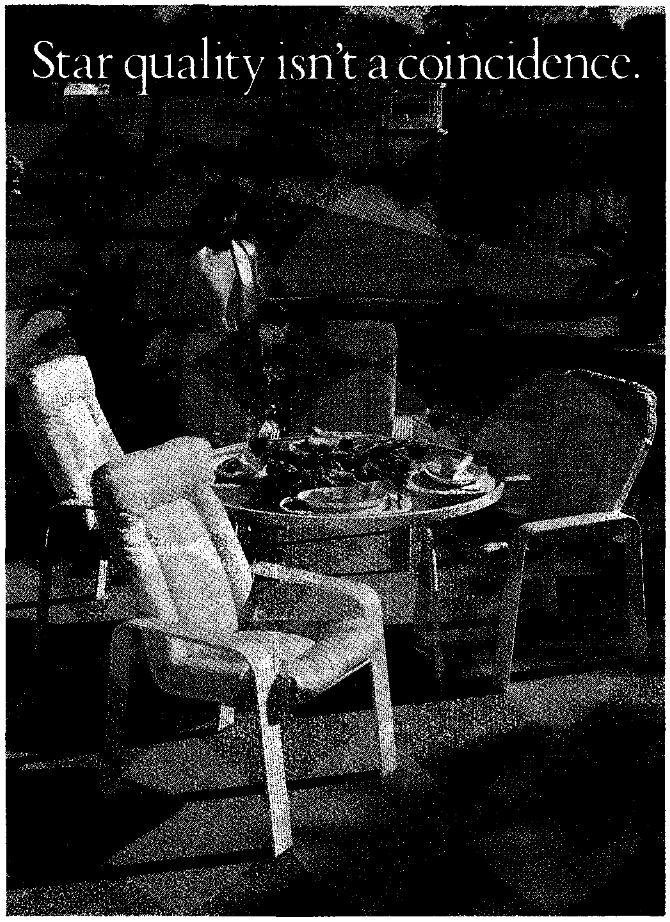

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the paddle blade into the reeds, and, waiting for a lull, sat bobbing in the little waves and admiring the yellow-green glow of a vast field of rape—one felt that it would show up in the dark like a phosphorescent watch dial. When the wind eased for a moment, I made a dash for the slightly more protected shore opposite, where there was also a more gently shelving bank. I disembarked here and towed the coracle for a quarter of a mile. A white domestic duck gone native watched me getting mud high on my boots. When I climbed back aboard, for another long unhindered spell, I made good use of a sponge I'd added to the coracle's basic equipment.

In this stretch, I made a simple navigational error, to which the enormous loops of the river, and the exertion, may have contributed. I saw a church tower across the fields and thought, That's Wroxeter church—I'm making good progress. But the sun wasn't quite where is should have been if that was Wroxeter. Indeed, my compass told me the church bore due west—not east, as Wroxeter would. It was Atcham church still. And this was confirmed by the realization that I had got only as far as the point where the River Tern joined the Severn. It poured in from the north, its gravy-colored waters remaining for a long way visibly independent. The Tern's extra flow gave me greater momentum. Along here, I caught up with the swans again; there were a dozen of them now, and they decided they weren't going any farther. They all turned round to face me. They spread their wings and began to beat them. Then they took off, right for me, a white-winged squadron, buffeting the air just above my head.

At Wroxeter the river went due south for more than a mile with Roman directness. Fortunately, there was a long island at the beginning of this stretch, and I chose, or was taken into, the narrower, more easterly channel. (Later, I read that most of these islands—I encountered perhaps four of them—were man-made at places where the river was shoal and where there were fords and weirs; the narrow channels behind the islands were created for hauling through barges, and the islands themselves furnished places where cargo could be temporarily unloaded to lighten the barges.) Here the Roman road now called Watling Street had crossed the river. A modern white house stood near the river, with a prosperous assortment of laundry billowing on a line in the garden, and a small red motorboat tied up to a little jetty—the first boat I'd seen. The Wroxeter church tower appeared in the trees behind.

I stopped on the riverbank for lunch at one o'clock, and, feeling restored, reëmbarked a half hour later. Sculling hard, past Cotons Farm, past sheep on the banks, I made the end of the stretch and coasted around a bend under the shelter of the right bank. On the opposite bank, the landscape was novel. The river ran at the foot of a forty-foot-high stone cliff, red-gray, with trees here and there growing out of deep fissures in the rock. This was Eyton, with an ancient tower—not visible but shown on the map—which I took to be part of the ancestral home of the Herberts. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, born here, was a brother of George Herbert the poet, and was himself a poet, philosopher, autobiographer, ambassador, linguist, and musician, and a good friend of Ben Jonson and John Donne. At the south end of this cliff, three men stood on the bank: two of them elderly, looking like gamekeepers; one, probably in his thirties, fishing. (The fishing on the river is generally privately owned, and proclaimed as such by bankside notices, and is rented out by landowners to fishing clubs, from which permits have to be bought.)

One of the older men called out, "What are you doing up this way?"

I said, "I'm going down the river from Shrewsbury. I left Atcham this morning."

The fisherman called out, "Did I see you at Atcham bridge yesterday?"

"Yes."

"With your wife, weren't you?" He seemed pretty well informed. He next asked, "Many fishermen between here and Atcham?"

"None," I said, "though there were a few at Atcham."

"Is the river colored up there?"

"No. All that seems to come in with the Tern. Does the muddiness affect the fishing?"

"Well, put it this way—I haven't caught anything yet."

The river drew me on. As we exchanged farewell waves, an R.A.F. jet fighter swept low, heading downriver, and, followed by its roar, was suddenly gone. I wondered if the pilot had seen me and had had the same curious feelings that I had at the momentary juxtaposition of our two forms of travel.

At half past two, the sun was hot; the wind had dropped a little. A cab-

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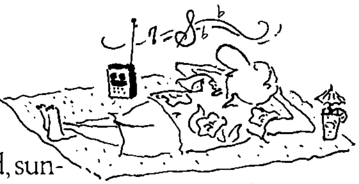

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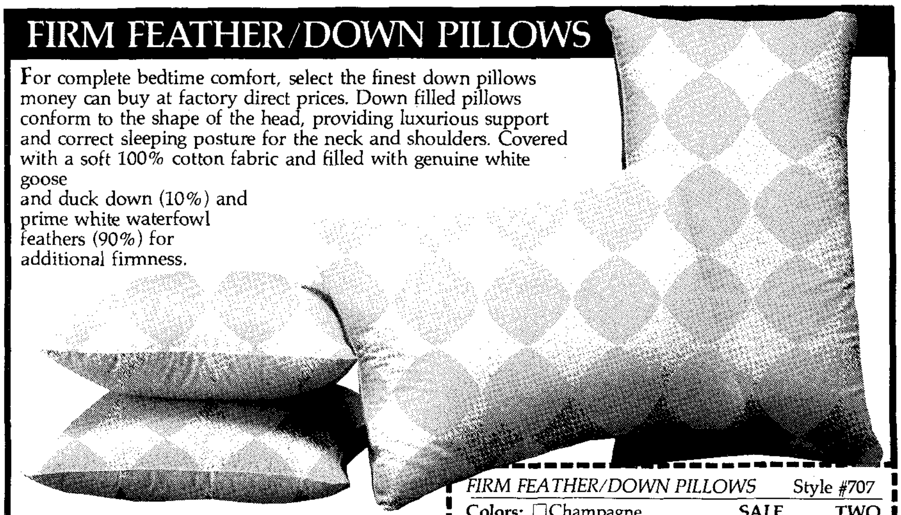

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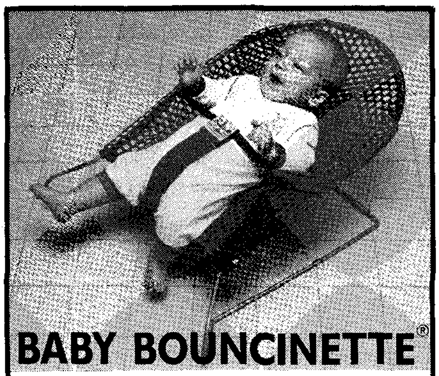

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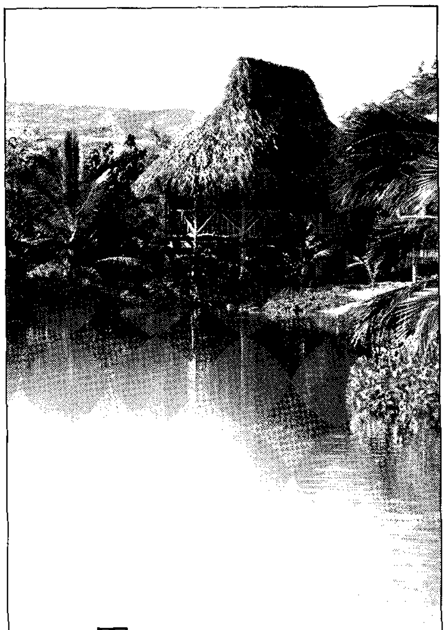
bage butterfly fluttered loopily past, overtaking me. Water striders walked the surface of the river. The Wrekin had reappeared and looked more than ever like a mini-Etna, waiting to awake. By the top of the last big bend before Cressage, there were woods on the left bank and a grassy beach on the right, grazed by sheep; then came a shoal, just before the three arches of Cressage bridge, and—to add to the willow-pattern effect—a veteran fisherman with rod and line. I called out "Good afternoon!" and was a little hurt to get no reply. Perhaps he didn't believe his eyes. I whisked past, and hauled out on the far side of the bridge. It was three-fifteen. Then, feeling like a true coracle man, I put my small craft on my back and walked up the lane to the hotel.

CRESSAGE: Lovely name, lovely place. The Old Hall is a mostly seventeenth-century timbered house looking out over the Severn, the bridge, and the fields that reach toward the foot of the Wrekin. It has a spacious restaurant but limited accommodations—only five bedrooms. Margot got there to find an electrician at work and a young girl named Karen in sole charge of the establishment. The owners were away on holiday. But Karen agreed to feed and lodge us, the only guests, and she gave us our choice of the Moat, the Rose, the Castle, the Wrekin, or the Severn Room. Margot chose the Wrekin Room for us. I found myself helping the electrician discover why the light over our bed was glowing when the switch was off (water was dripping into a junction box from a leaking radiator in an attic room), and how the fan in the bar could be made to function. When Karen couldn't get the furnace going (and the repairman couldn't be reached), I spent fifteen minutes pressing various buttons and fiddling with contacts and switches, and got it started, so there was hot water for baths that night. Margot was equally busy, talking to the vegetable-delivery man, making tea in the kitchen, and shooing out of the elegant front hall a pair of white ducks that kept walking in through the open door from the garden. In a nearby pub, we met the elderly fisherman I had passed above the bridge, and he apologized for not responding to what, on reflection, he had realized was my greeting. He explained that when he fished he always turned off his hearing aid. The next morning, Karen cooked me one of the best bacon-eggs-sausages-tomatoes-mushrooms-fried-bread breakfasts I've ever had. We had a feeling of being needed—of being more than guests—and were sorry when we had to leave.

That morning, the top of the Wrekin was mist-shrouded, and, seen from the bay window of the Wrekin Room at seven o'clock, the limpid grays and greens of bridge, river, and meadows had an impermanent air; the climbing sun would burn off the mist and sharpen the colors. It was going to be a splendid, nearly windless day. When I launched the coracle next to Cressage bridge at nine-forty, the air was just moist, with little shudders—mere wisps of breeze—disturbing it now and then. The word "zephyr" seemed appropriate; "sylvan" and "sward" were other words that came to mind. Filaments of gossamer drifted through the air. Because I was afloat on what I now thought of as Eustace's waters, and so had a perhaps unreasonable confidence in my coracle-handling ability, I left my life jacket in the bottom of the craft, behind the thwart. I knew that the river would do a lot of the work for me today, and I let it carry me contemplatively, at first, until I got into my sculling stride on a long west-east stretch. Then came a sharp, exciting bend northward, with a strong back eddy at the outside elbow of the bend. The current suddenly shot me along among bunched bubbles of foam.

Other elements of my passage that morning were similar to those of the two previous days, though intensified by the beneficent weather, and perhaps also by the sense that this was the concluding stage, so that I looked at birds and plants and water, and listened to natural sounds, with the greater attention of one who must shortly relinquish these pleasures. Now, some six miles from Ironbridge, I was, as well, among the names and places Eustace had talked of—landmarks for the Rogerses. I was looking at fields and woods where rabbits had been trapped, and was passing over waters where salmon nets and eel lines had been laid while landowners and gamekeepers raged on the banks. The perfection of the pastoral was here, at Leighton, where the Severn comes closest to the Wrekin. A fine eighteenth-century brick mansion stood amid terraced lawns and parkland, bringing to mind Eustace's "old man Kynnersley," who had lived in



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the house. (Another Leighton native, born in the village in 1881, was Mary Webb, author of "Gone to Earth" and other rural novels that had a vogue in the late nineteen-twenties and perhaps—with those of D. H. Lawrence—inspired Stella Gibbons to her comic parody of the genre, "Cold Comfort Farm.") Sheep browsed on the Leighton side among gorse and oxeye daisies while Cuyp-like golden cows munched in the low pastures across the river. Canada geese patrolled with their young along the bank. I saw a salmon jump as I drifted around the bend beneath the woods of Cockshut Rough, and, sculling close to a dead tree that had fallen out into the river, I got within ten feet of a fox. He was standing out over the water on a bough: red-brown, sharp-eared, with something black and floppy in his mouth. When he saw me, he gave me a look that suggested I had no right to get so close to him, and then he trotted onto the bank and into the trees.

A massive landmark now rose ahead, signalling the end of the river's leisurely bends through water meadows, and the beginning of the hills through which it passed narrower and deeper: Buildwas power station. What one sees from some way upstream is a single tall chimney and four huge concrete cooling towers, bulging above and below narrow waists, like Cycladic female statuettes, and spouting steam into a white cloud above the wooded gorge. (The plant at Buildwas was one of six West Midlands power stations being tested to find out if their cooling-tower emissions were connected with a sudden outbreak in the neighboring county of Staffordshire of the virulent pneumonia known as Legionnaires' disease; they were not blamed, in the end, but the temptation was strong, when one was in their immediate vicinity, to hold one's breath as long as one could.) I made for the right bank just before reaching the power station, by Buildwas road bridge, a utilitarian iron span built in this century. Just below the bridge were some rough wooden steps, where I tied up. A number of painted stakes were planted on the bank, one higher than the next, to indicate the river level; it was instructive to see how high it might rise. The name Buildwas is from the Old English *gebyldu* (building), and *waesse* (damp soil), and the building on damp soil that I walked to, half hidden in the trees just upstream of the bridge, was the ruined late-Norman Cister-

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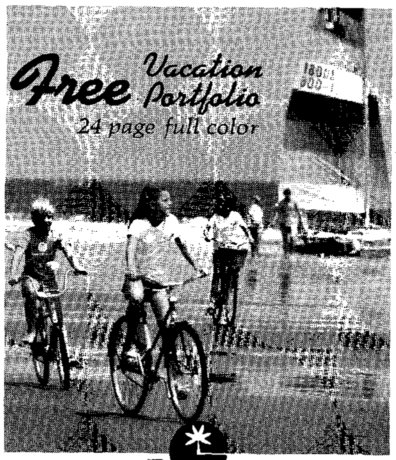

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cian abbey, which has stood there for more than eight hundred years. Now it consisted of a bare stone nave, aisles, and parts of a cloister, their roofs and vaulting long gone; swallows darted through the round-topped windows. The Cistercian monks of Buildwas were farmers and shepherds and wore habits woven from undyed fleece; they exported their surplus wool as far as Italy. There is at the spot an accumulated feeling of fine simplicity.

Two men in fibre-glass kayaks were coming upriver, paddling in the eddies next to the bank, as I got back to my craft. One of them said as he passed, "That's a grand little coracle!" At the moment I stepped into it, there came from the power station a loud digestive rumble, which went on for thirty seconds—perhaps the sound of coal being engorged. The place, with its disproportionate scale and apparent lack of human beings working there, had a slightly eerie atmosphere. This had struck Margot, too. After I'd been under way for five minutes, I saw her on the left bank, opposite the power station, finishing a sketch. I stopped to say hello and coördinate our movements through this last segment of the voyage: it was now a little less than two miles to Ironbridge. When I set off again, she walked more or less abreast of me along the riverside path where it existed, and where it did not she scrambled through a hedge and followed the road below Coalbrookdale. Several bridges leading to the power station gave access for road trucks and rail wagons carrying coal; power cables sizzled overhead; great clouds of white steam rose from the cooling towers; and a continuous murmur came from a building beside the river which I recognized as the water-intake plant where Eustace had worked in the days before the cooling towers were built. Keen to put these industrial fascinations behind me, I sculled hard, making Margot hurry to keep me in sight.

In a few minutes, I had rounded the bend below the overhanging woods of Benthall Edge, on the right bank. On the left bank, the road ran into Ironbridge along a riverside terrace, at whose iron railing visitors stood to look down at the Severn, and, seeing me, to wave. I waved back at them with the paddle, and the coracle took a liberated whirl—which I hoped the spectators knew was perfectly intentional on my part. The river twisted slightly again, and ahead I could see the iron bridge, spun across the gorge

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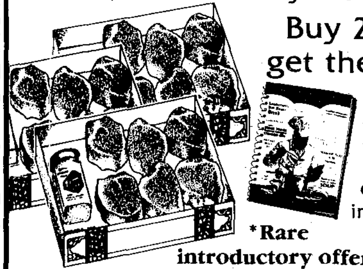
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like a substantial cobweb. From the river surface, the gorge seemed deep; the houses of the village were stacked high one above another. I could see the third floor and the roof of the Tontine, where Margot and I intended to have lunch. The river was running faster. I gave myself a firm order to concentrate now, in these last minutes, for I didn't want to tumble in—here, of all places—or botch my landing. Nor did I want to spoil my sculling style by being too conscious of it. I could see a number of people standing on the bridge, and, seeing me coming, they beckoned to others to let them know there was something of interest down below. My attention was momentarily taken by a spark of metallic blue that seemed to burst from the river like an electric flash and streak away: a kingfisher. Then I was under the bridge, passing under the center of the arch, and I could see Eustace's shed, the bank up to his front garden, and Eustace himself, in shirtsleeves and pullover, clipping the front hedge, his back to the river. I called out "Eustace!" as I sculled toward the bank from midstream. For a moment, I thought that Eustace was going to have an attack of shyness and, without looking, take to his house; there was a suspicion of movement that way. Then he turned and saw me. He put down the shears, came down the bank, and stood watching me as I sculled vigorously over the last few yards of current to his raft.

"You've had a good day for it, haven't you?" he said, looking really pleased to see me and the coracle he had made. "How did you like the little boat?" And then, before I could answer him, or express my own feeling of well-being, he added his accolade: "You've done very well."

—Anthony Bailey

•

Commissioner W.D. McCorkle has suggested the creation of a sanity department to serve both the city and county but operated as an independent arm of local government. He proposes financing such a department through sales taxes which all residents pay.—*Americus (Ga.) Times-Recorder.*

Hear! Hear!

•

THE ARTISTIC LIFE

[*From the Waikiki Beach Press*]

"Descended From Killer Apes," art exhibition about assault with blunt instruments, featuring Doug Doi and Fae Yamaguchi, SOHO Too Gallery and Loft.

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What 1962 megahit did Brian Hyland seal his place in musical history with? 1

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What singer did Ed Sullivan refer to as "a real decent kid"? 5

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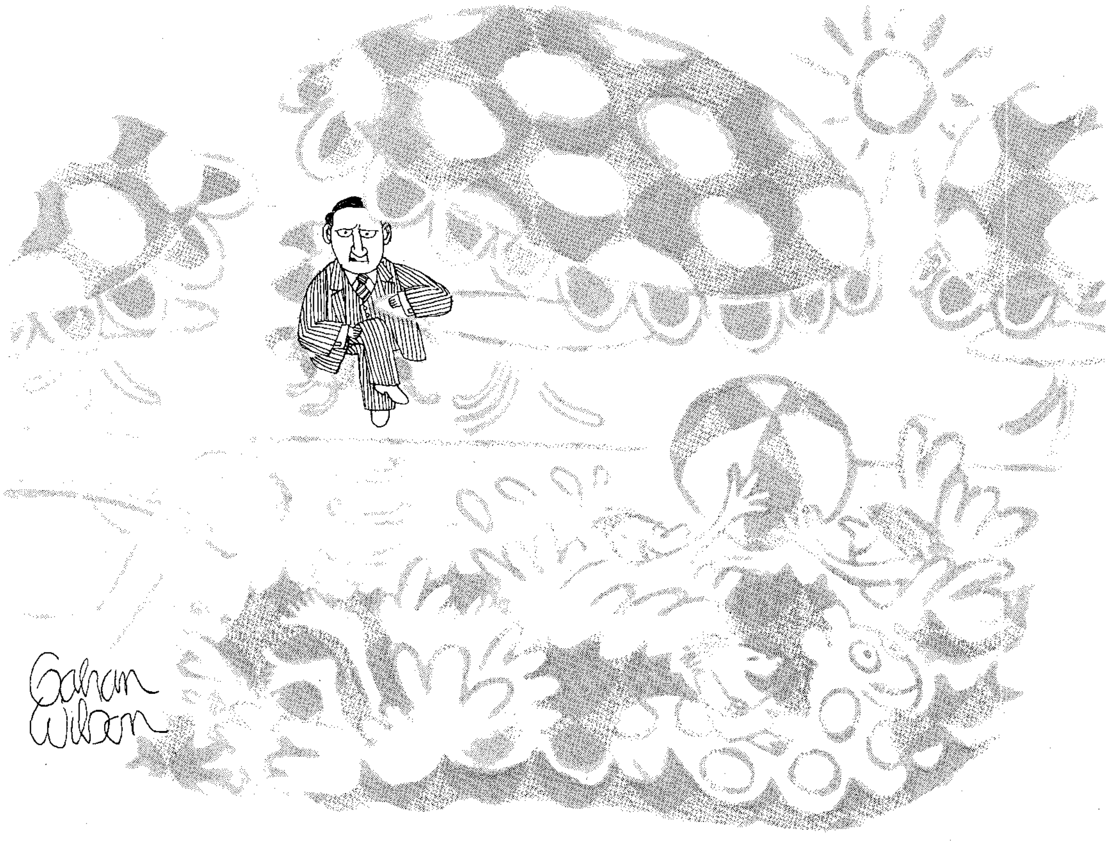
THE THEATRE

Off Broadway

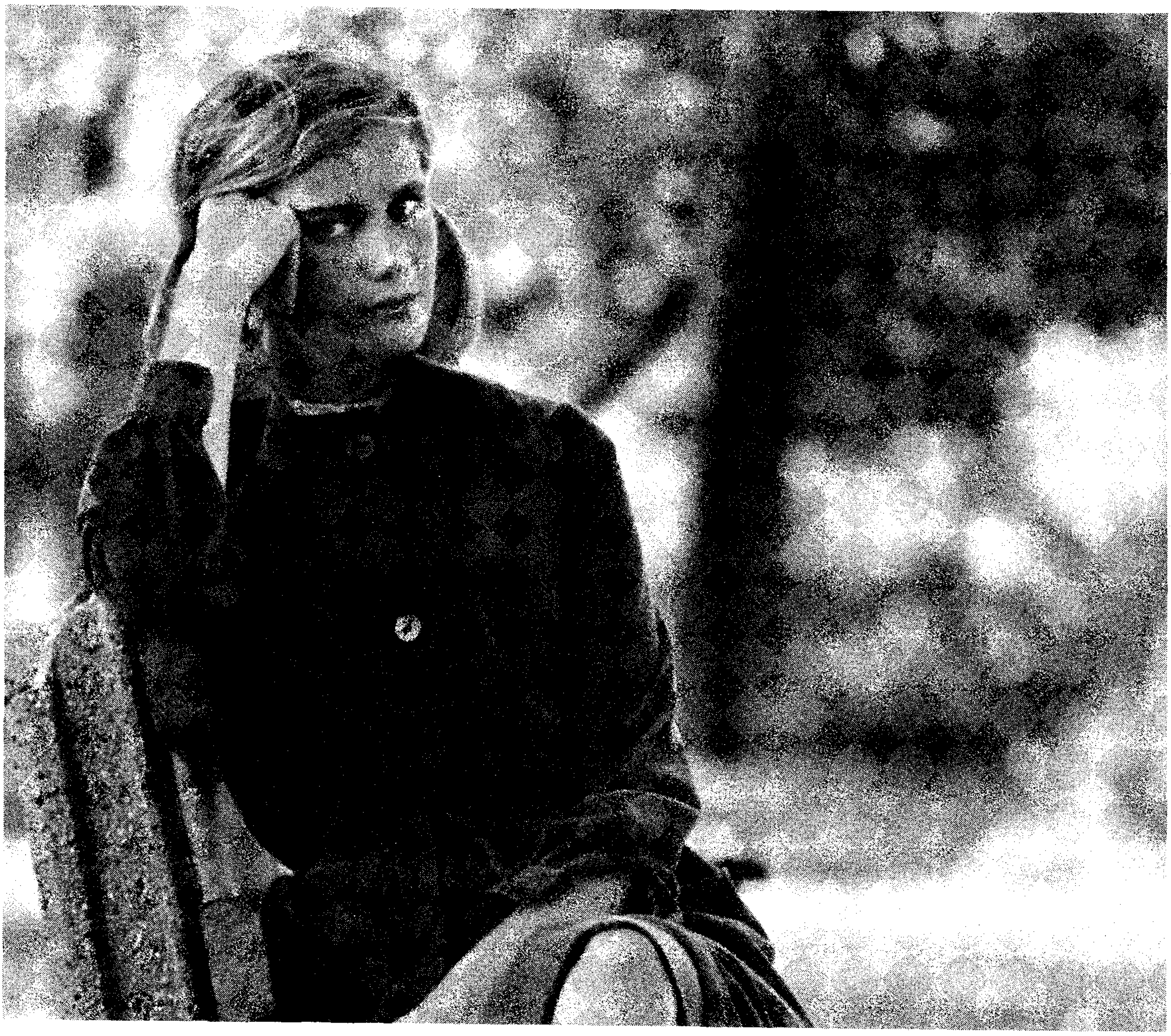
ROBERT DE NIRO is giving a stunning performance at the Public in "Cuba and His Teddy Bear," a strong first full-length play by Reinaldo Povod, about a drug dealer called Cuba and his fifteen-year-old son. They live on the lower East Side of this city, and Cuba is bringing up the boy alone. The mother, who has deserted husband and son, is a Puerto Rican, and the boy, Teddy, is considered "white." Mysterious. He has no taste for anything Hispanic, doesn't even speak Spanish, hates the music. He wants to be a writer, natch, but fortunately literature is skimped in the action almost to the end. As the play opens, Cuba is sitting at a table with his supplier, Jackie, who is preparing—cutting? pulverizing? (my terminology is shaky in these matters)—cocaine for him. Jackie has brought along a couple of pounds of marijuana as well, which he is eager to dispose of. Teddy, also present, suggests that a friend of his, an addict and writer called Che, handle it. Cuba, a rigorous parent, is very angry, and leery of Che, as well he might be; he refuses to go out and meet Che but agrees to allow him to come to the house. There is much paternal counselling—rough and stylish stuff, absolutely believable. But when Che arrives with an extremely sinister dealer, Cuba sizes them up and, gun in hand, throws them out. He and Jackie leave, and Teddy gets out his secret cache of heroin and tries unsuccessfully to shoot up. Che, a flamboyant, pretentious homosexual, returns with the silent dealer, who has got wind of the marijuana and wants it. Considerable activity ensues, much of it frightening (and a lot of it stagy and melodramatic), before Cuba and Jackie return. Cuba's fury at the boy, combined with his fear and love for him, are remarkably portrayed by Mr. De Niro.

If there are better tidings for the theatre than a real play by a new playwright, I cannot imagine what they would be. The first act runs a long time, but not a minute too long for me; I was captivated throughout. The second of the two acts is flawed: Che, once we get to know him, is rather a letdown (unlike the terrifying dealer), and the excerpts from a manuscript of Teddy's, which his father discovers and reads aloud, become very trying. The point, though, is that these flaws don't matter a damn; what does matter is the characters and their speech and the life they lead and the story that is being told. Mr. Povod knows the people he is writing about; he is not slumming or daydreaming. What is fascinating—and is always true when an unfamiliar world is brought to light—is what is taken for granted. Cuba and his supplier, for example, talk shop constantly in front of Teddy, who frequently joins in, yet no boy was ever more carefully watched or disciplined. The sense of a drug-drenched Hispanic community is maintained throughout; a pair of Cuba's friends, a man and a woman high on cocaine and dedicated to a good time, are like messengers from the streets. As for the acting, Mr. De Niro, made up to resemble Fidel Castro, perhaps, couldn't be better, and he is ably supported, especially by Ralph Macchio as Teddy, Burt Young as the supplier, and Paul Calderon as the sinister dealer. Scenery, costumes, and lighting—all commendable—by Donald Eastman, Gabriel Berry, and Anne E. Militello, respectively. Bill Hart was the competent director.

AN astringent book reviewer for this magazine once turned down an assigned novel because, as she put it, "It's full of that terrible compassion"—a sentence that will serve as a comment on the five one-acters that form the first half of "Ten by Tennessee," a two-evening program presented at the Lucille Lortel by the Acting Company, under Michael Kahn's direction. I am the wrong audience for these Williams plays, having no taste for his frail, addled Southern females, so sentimentally conceived and portrayed as they look into the middle distance and give voice to their delusions or dreams or memories while everyone else present shifts from foot to foot. ("The Long Goodbye," somewhat better than the others but no less maudlin, is about a man's memories.) The members of the Acting Com-



"I just can't seem to get into the spirit of the thing."



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pany, all but one of them alumni of the Juilliard School, do pretty well under the circumstances. What possessed them to think that this material could be of any use outside the classroom? Time after time, I longed for the voice (and the backbone and humor) of the incomparable Eudora Welty, from south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

"PROFESSIONALLY SPEAKING," at St. Peter's, is a cocky little revue—or, to be accurate, a revue that becomes entertaining after some awkwardness and heaviness at the start. Peter Winkler, Ernst Muller, and Frederic Block wrote the music and lyrics. The music seems appropriate and lively enough (at first hearing); many of the lyrics are funny, some not so. The subject is the professions. Those under consideration at the beginning are medicine and the law, and the jokes are about greedy or absent-minded doctors and malpractice suits or about litigation and ambulance-chasing, among other boring topics (pretty good jokes, though). Then, after the intermission, things pick up. The target changes to teaching. The material becomes much more original and funny and charming, and the songs fresh and sensitive and lively. The work of the company, which has seemed ill-matched and amateurish, suddenly improves. By the time the show was over, I admired David Ardao, Meg Bussert, Hal Davis, Kathy Morath, Dennis Bailey, and Marilyn Pasekoff as singers and actors. Tony Tanner was the good director. Robert Alan Harper designed the sets, P. Chelsea Harriman designed the costumes, and Barry Arnold designed the lighting.

—EDITH OLIVER

•

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[*Dr. Mervin Shalowitz quoted in the HMO/PPO Tracking Report, published by the Chicago Hospital Council*]

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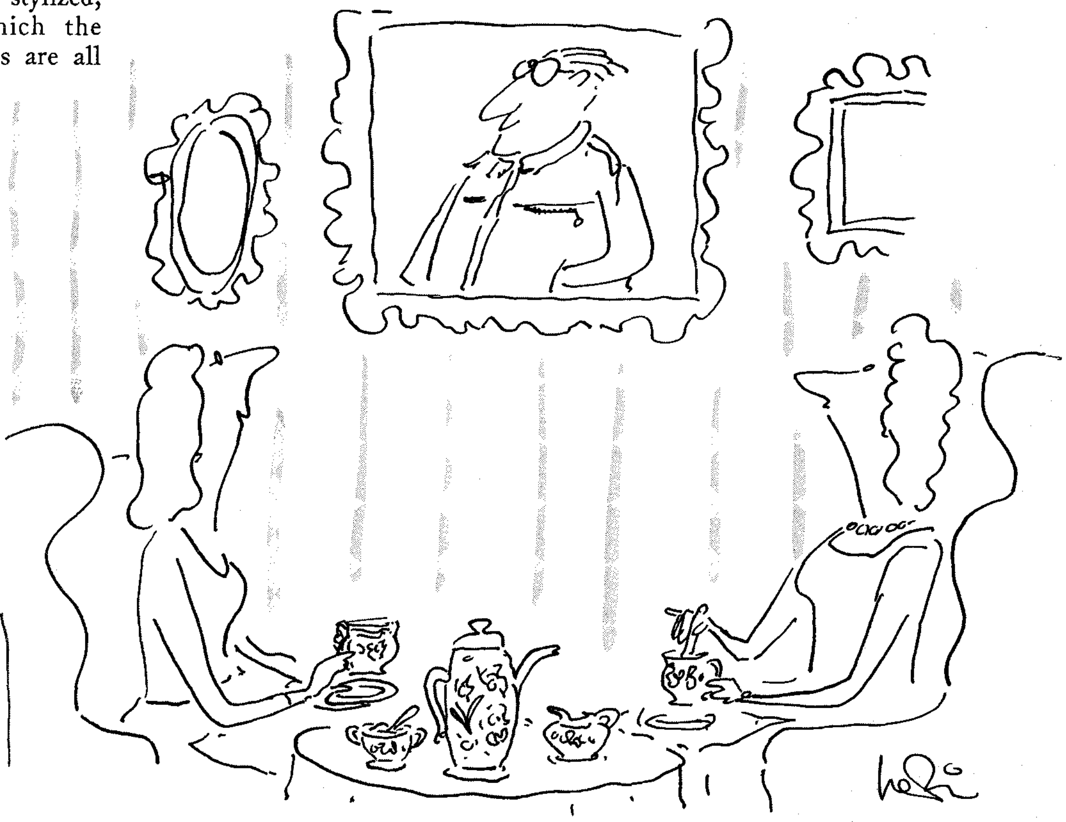
THE CURRENT CINEMA

*Fizzle/A*L*D*A*

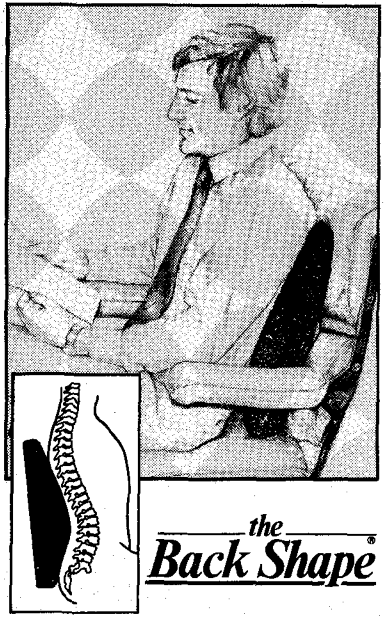
"I THOUGHT, 'My lord, one thing is certain, and that's that they'll make musicals one day about the glamour-studded 1950s.' " This prophecy by the hero of Colin MacInnes's 1959 novel "Absolute Beginners" is a bitter joke: his next words are "And I thought, my heaven, one thing is certain too, I'm miserable." This narrator-hero, a hipster photographer, is just a kid—he's in his last year as a teen-ager—but he's a smart, spirited kid (he has all the forty-four-year-old author's experience), and we see and feel street life in London in the summer of 1958 through his consciousness. The boy has no name in the novel, which is an inventive, slangy, poetic celebration of youth and jazz and the city, and a cry of disgust at the way teen-agers, who didn't emerge as a group with money to spend until the fifties, are already being commercialized and corrupted. He's called Colin in the ambitious, prophecy-fulfilling musical, directed by the thirty-one-year-old Julien Temple. "Ambitious" isn't a dig. The movie goes to hell in its second half, and the first half doesn't really work, either, but it's trying for something. Temple takes on the large order of producing a total vision—a stylized, widescreen musical in which the streets and shops and houses are all part of the set, with the camera swerving around corners, and the whole huge cast performs like a troupe doing street theatre. At times, it's like a nightmare of Vincente Minnelli staging the Brecht-Weill "Threepenny Opera" at M-G-M. The staging is full of "ideas," but none of them are carried very far—they don't amount to anything more than distraction and diversion. Everything is kept in motion, though not exactly to the music, and, whether because of the fast-cutting style that Temple developed from his work in rock videos or because of the generally undistinguished choreography, it's peculiarly unlyrical and ephemeral—the images leave no afterimages.

The movie has an Expressionist vividness—a glossy immediacy. It's a total vision, but of what? You can feel the flash and determination that went into it. What you don't feel is the tormented romanticism that made English adolescents in the seventies swear by the novel the way American kids had earlier sworn by "The Catcher in the Rye." In the movie we recognize that the teen-agers are the "absolute beginners" who are just starting to experience their freedom when they're snared by one group of exploiters or another, but there's no strong feeling attached to the recognition. And we experience little of the hero's deep love of London, or the pain of his disillusionment when street gangs attack the black immigrants from the West Indies and the authorities don't come to their aid—don't even condemn the attackers. Temple's teeming images have a look of their own but they're singularly short of emotion, and there are so many characters to keep track of and so much visual powie that the central story of Colin (Eddie O'Connell) and his love for Suzette (Patsy Kensit) doesn't have any dramatic weight. Partly, this is because the role of Colin is cast much too conventionally; what's needed is expressiveness, and Eddie O'Connell is just a good-looking kid, shallowly amiable, who can wear tight pants. With O'Connell in the role, Temple has no way to suggest the hero's quality of mind. So who cares when Colin sells out and becomes "a professional teen-ager"? That's what Eddie O'Connell is anyway. At first sight, Patsy Kensit seems a knockout. A blond dolly with babyish cheeks and a petulant mouth, she's a harbinger of the Swinging London that will arrive in the sixties. But you don't see anything more in Kensit after your first look, and you don't hear much to care about when she sings "Having It All." She's generic, like O'Connell, and she's playing a sullen postmodern version of Jayne Mansfield in Frank Tashlin's 1956 "The Girl Can't Help It." So you don't feel bad about little Suzette's marrying for money and position rather than love.

The movie is slanted to youth, but it's the old pros who provide the entertaining little squiggles that keep it going. Some of the performers fit MacInnes's descriptions to a comic T. As Henley, dressmaker to the Queen, and the head of the Mayfair fashion house where the seventeen-year-old Suzette is a lowly assistant, James Fox is just as MacInnes described him—"looking like a superior footman on



"Roger always lived on the edge. Then one day he fell off."



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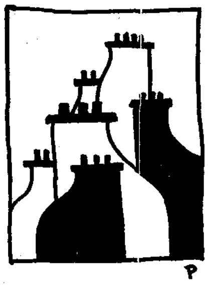
his day off." And he's funny at it. As the total cynic Vendice Partners, the advertising man whom Colin has dealings with, David Bowie, thatched with short blond hair, is "one of those young men with an old face, or old ones with a young one, hard to tell which." Bowie's Vendice has nifty gestures, like slicking his hair back over his ears with both hands—copping a feel of his own deluxe skull. As Colin's weakling father, Ray Davies (of the Kinks) brings a music-hall grunginess and bounce to his number "Quiet Life," and as the titian-haired gossip columnist Dido Lament the American Anita Morris has the wormy-rose beauty of a young Gabor sister—she definitely has "eyes [that] say she knows just how much your price will be." Julien Temple's work can be lively in the scenes where new characters are introduced. There are dozens of them (such as the talent agent, played by Lionel Blair, the psycho Flikker, played by Bruce Payne, and the amoral boy panderer Wizard, played by Graham Fletcher-Cook), who provide glints of humor and bits of grotesquerie but don't get a chance to do what you feel they could. Temple doesn't show any interest in developing them. He wouldn't have time anyway. The script, by Richard Burridge, Christopher Wicking, Don MacPherson, and probably others, tries to retain just about everybody in the book (which itself had more characters than MacInnes knew what to do with).



Sade appears in one sequence and sings "Killer Blow." She sounds just fine, and she has one real function here: she cools out the movie—the speeding images slow down and you get to rest your eyes on her. It may occur to you that her singing isn't right for the period, but everything is slightly off—the film isn't really set in the late fifties or any other period. It goes from one musical idiom to another, with the many performers singing in their own styles (and sometimes singing their own compositions) and the arrangements, by Gil Evans—sometimes more dissonant than you might expect in a pop musical—holding it all together. And it's impressive to see an attempt at a movie musical in which the songs carry much of the characterization and the plot. But it's as though the images were edited to different music. Despite Temple's background and his reputation, he doesn't seem to have a rhythmic style. You may register this at the beginning, when the camera and the cuts are at odds with the movements of the people in the street. And you may feel it quite acutely when Bowie has his big singing-and-tapping number "That's Motivation"—it's the only time in the movie that you're fully caught up in a performer's rhythm—and Temple gets jumpy and cuts away. The second half goes really bad: once the racial confrontations start and there's rioting in the streets, the music and the images seem to be coming from two different TV channels. The choreography is an inept homage to the high-kicking big rumble in "West Side Story," and there's so much of this rumbling that you can't help thinking that Jerome Robbins has a lot to answer for. The street fighting also carries a moldy burden of political didacticism. In the movie (though not in the novel), the violence is instigated by Henley and Vendice Partners, who are co-conspirators planning to make millions with real-estate developments on the sites of the slum dwellings. They employ the terror tactics of slumlords like Rachman, and we get a fanatic Oswald Mosley–Enoch Powell speech delivered (by Steven Berkoff) to a meeting of hate-filled bullies. The movie becomes a self-important mess. It puts itself on the side of virtue by having the psychos and neo-Fascists marching through the streets shouting the slogan "Deport All Niggers." A sign is also displayed calling for an end to "Jews, homos, and blacks," though the film keeps encouraging you to laugh at Henley's twittish prissiness and Colin calls him an "old queen."

For all the scattershot energy that has gone into "Absolute Beginners," it certainly doesn't give you the exhilaration of a musical. It's like a zippy, noisy commercial—all movement. Temple may represent a new phenomenon: a director perfectly attuned to rock videos—i.e., commercials that simulate the emotions of old movies, heightening them like crazy. In the book, the harshness of the material works because of MacInnes's strong poetic feelings; he's never just bitter—you always know there's love under the bitterness. Temple tries to make the harshness work by stylization; the result is a part-intentional, part-unintentional deconstruction of the Hollywood musical. There's all this fizz in his work and no feeling. Maybe only a director who came up via videos would stage a balletic race riot so confusingly that it's just about impossible to root for either side.

You may not be too distressed by all this unless you know the book—a precursor of Anthony Burgess's 1962 "A Clockwork Orange"—or give yourself the pleasure of reading it. This is a case where the movie's images are so weak that they don't compete with the book's. Colin MacInnes imparts his love of jazz; he even imparts some of the sensations of dancing. (The title "Absolute Beginners" is taken from the lowest category of dance classes.) He has his young narrator-hero describe what happened one night when he was on the dance floor with Suzette: "there we were, weaving together like a pair of springs connected by invisible elastic wires, until we reached that most glorious moment of all in dancing, that doesn't come often, and usually, admittedly, only when you're whipping it up a bit to show the multitude—that is, the dance starts to do it for you, you don't bloody well know what you're up to any longer, except that you can't put a limb wrong anywhere, and your whole dam brain and sex and personality have actually become that dance, *are* it—it's heavenly!" MacInnes, who was born in 1914 and died in 1976, is so emotionally unarmored that he makes you feel that blissful high, and perhaps recall times when you experienced it. MacInnes was an artist; Temple, at this point, is only a wizard.

THERE is a price to be paid for being likable in a TV series week after week, year after year: the only thing that can save Alan Alda now is to play bastards or weirdos, preferably in a heavy disguise. It's possible that nothing less than a gorilla suit and a voice box will do, but maybe there'd be some hope for him if he didn't write his own roles. In "Sweet Liberty," which he wrote, directed, and stars in, he's a lump of laid-back complacency smack at the center of the picture, and since he writes his dialogue for his familiar vocal rhythms he's like a slightly stupid uncle who has been hugging us and boring us with his jokes for as long as we can remember. Of course, this is unfair. But being fair is what Alan Alda is all about, and it's clammy, it's oppressive. You might want to tear off his benign mask to see what was underneath if your instincts didn't tell you there's nothing different underneath.

You breathe stale air at "Sweet Liberty," but this satirical comedy made me laugh quite a lot anyway. Alda plays a history professor whose Pulitzer Prize-winning book on the American Revolution has been bought by Hollywood and is to be filmed during the summer in the area where the events he wrote about took place—in and around the fictional college town of Sayeville, North Carolina, where he teaches. He has been involved in a longtime affair with an attractive young member of the English Department, played by the unlucky Lise Hilboldt, who is required to be even nicer than he is, and to beam at him and stitch, stitch, stitch on a quilt, even in bed; these two representatives of solid and enduring American values have a soggy running argument about whether she should move in with him, and let's let it go at that. The fun in the movie comes from the Hollywood contingent of show folk who invade the community: Michael Caine as the star, Michelle Pfeiffer as the leading lady, Bob Hoskins as the scriptwriter, and Saul Rubinek as the director.

Caine plays a cliché—a skirt-chasing daredevil—as if it were a role in a classic farce, and he makes a near-classic out of it. His vocal rhythms may suggest a throwback to Errol Flynn, and his actions may stir a thought of his offscreen friend Sean Connery, but the light-headed aplomb is all his own. So is his supple attentiveness when he meets the wife of the college president. It tells us that he doesn't set out to make conquests—he's simply alert to the signals that women give out and other men aren't watchful enough to pick up on. The president's eager wife (Lois Chiles, with terrific comic verve) has been waiting for him for a long time; she sends out signals like the bells of Notre Dame. As a womanizer, he provides a service, and he seems to live in a state of grace. Caine convinces you that no harm can come to this foolish movie star—that he's beloved of the gods as well as of the public. (The moviemakers—or Caine himself—may have doubted no harm could come to him: a double seems to be standing in for him in some of his fencing scenes.)

Michelle Pfeiffer has the enchanting prettiness of a pink-and-white flower; she has no dark tones yet and no mystery (maybe her roles just

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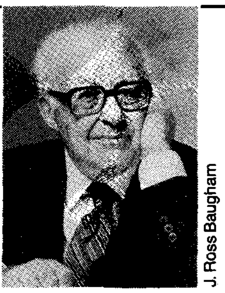
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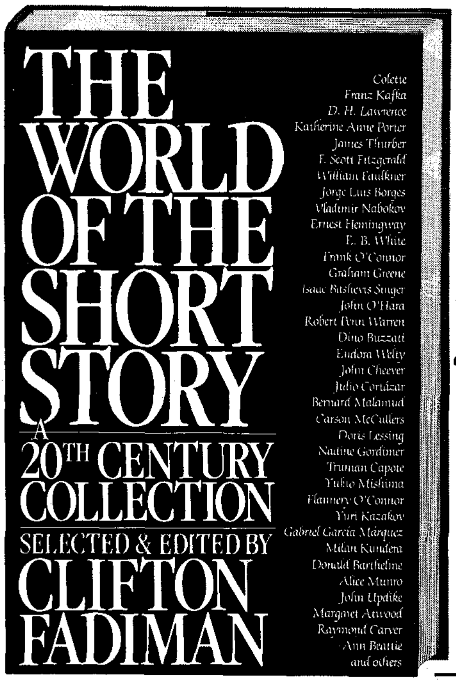
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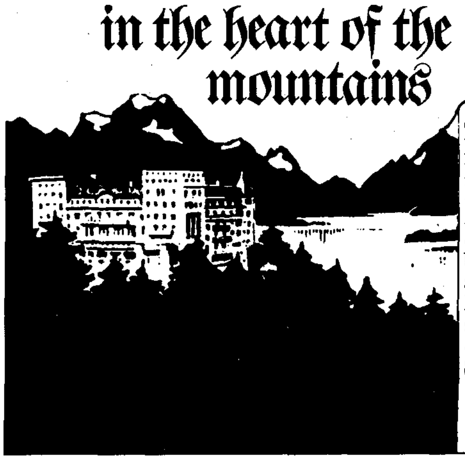
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haven't given her the opportunities to show them), but she's at ease in front of the camera, and she has a lovely streak of humor. She plays what amounts to a double role here. We first meet the starlet in her Revolutionary-period costume and speaking in an archaic mode, because she believes in staying "in character" as fully as possible. In costume, she has a chirruping sweetness; you think of her as a bit of a tweetybrain—a dits. So it's a small shock—and the best moment in the movie—when the prof goes to see her at her apartment, where she's in modern dress, speaking on the phone. She turns to him and we see a faintly neurotic, career-centered young actress who hasn't the slightest confusion about what's real and what's illusion. (It's like the comparable scene in "The French Lieutenant's Woman," but not so studied, and, I think, better.)

As the Hollywood Jewish writer who's always hungry for something to chew on, the English actor Bob Hoskins is small, bald, and bearded, a lovable vulgarian with a voice as loud as his madras jacket. His American accent may not be altogether convincing (at times he might be a gay Cockney cowboy), but he's better than convincing—he's hugely funny. (And his role is a well-written broad caricature of an amiable hack.) Adorned with such artifacts of prosperity as a gold Rolex, Saul Rubinek does a very shrewd comic turn as the director who just wants to get the picture shot and get on with the next deal. He has the wily-politician look that you often see on directors, and he sizes up the professor in an unimpressed glance. Rubinek is wonderful in the scene where he sets up a battle the way he wants it fought, ignoring the local people, for whom the details of this battle have been a lifelong avocation. In the structure of the film, he represents Hollywood's mediocrity and aggressive vulgarity, which is pitted against the professor's passion for historical accuracy. This isn't a battle between bad and good, though. With the fatuous, outraged professor barging onto the locations and complaining about the color of the uniforms or the shape of the hats, our sympathy goes to the director, who's putting up with the star's demands and the leading lady's demands and now has this academic jerk to contend with. It's clear that Alda isn't trying to make the professor a heroic idealist. Probably he wants us to see the hopelessness of the prof's obsession with historical accuracy, and to see why compromises are inevitable. But he may not realize that we don't want to contend with this jerk, either; he isn't stylized enough to be funny. (It's too bad that we don't get to see Rubinek's rushes of the scenes where the professor has persuaded the starlet to speak his "authentic" dialogue; we need to be able to compare it with the little hack's dialogue—which might have been livelier.)

Alda shows a neat, light touch as a director in scenes such as the star's first moments in town. Caine signs an autograph for a young girl and presses her hand while giving her a smarmy, old-roué's smile that's like a pledge to the audience that there will be seductions coming. Alda does well, too, with the Hollywood stuntmen, who, out here in North Carolina (actually the film was shot on Long Island, around Sag Harbor and Southampton), are a race apart. If you just ride along with the movie's conventionality, there are enough enjoyable scenes to put you in a good mood. But though Alda's writing tends to be too explicit—he wants to be sure that everyone in the audience can follow the plot points—his basic intentions are foggy. I think he's trying to say, "These Hollywood high rollers are off in a world of their own, but we solid citizens—we're the real people." And I think he wants us to identify with the prof as a decent, ordinary man who's a bit of a pompous fool. This is that damned self-effacing liberal fairness of his. He wants us to see that the professor is smug and insecure but that he's right about the important things. What Alda doesn't seem to grasp is that this doesn't shape up as comic; all it is is limp. Alda's conception of the professor (and of himself) throws a wet blanket over his knack for writing and directing comedy. And the professor's naïveté about what Hollywood intends to do with his book is like something out of a movie of forty or fifty years ago. This brand of unworldliness is worn to the stump.

—PAULINE KAEL

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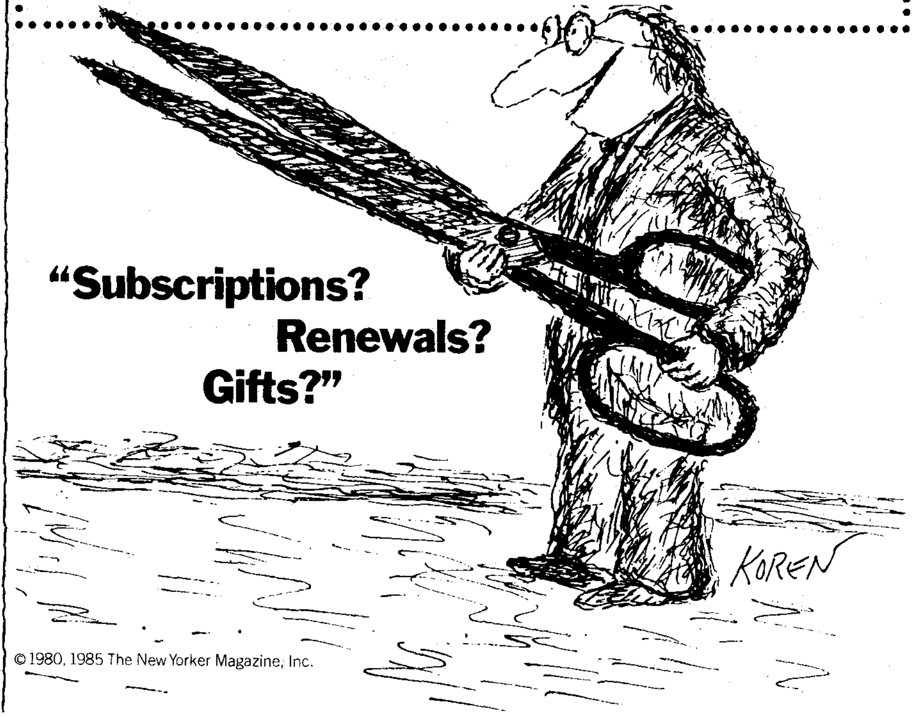
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THE SPORTING SCENE

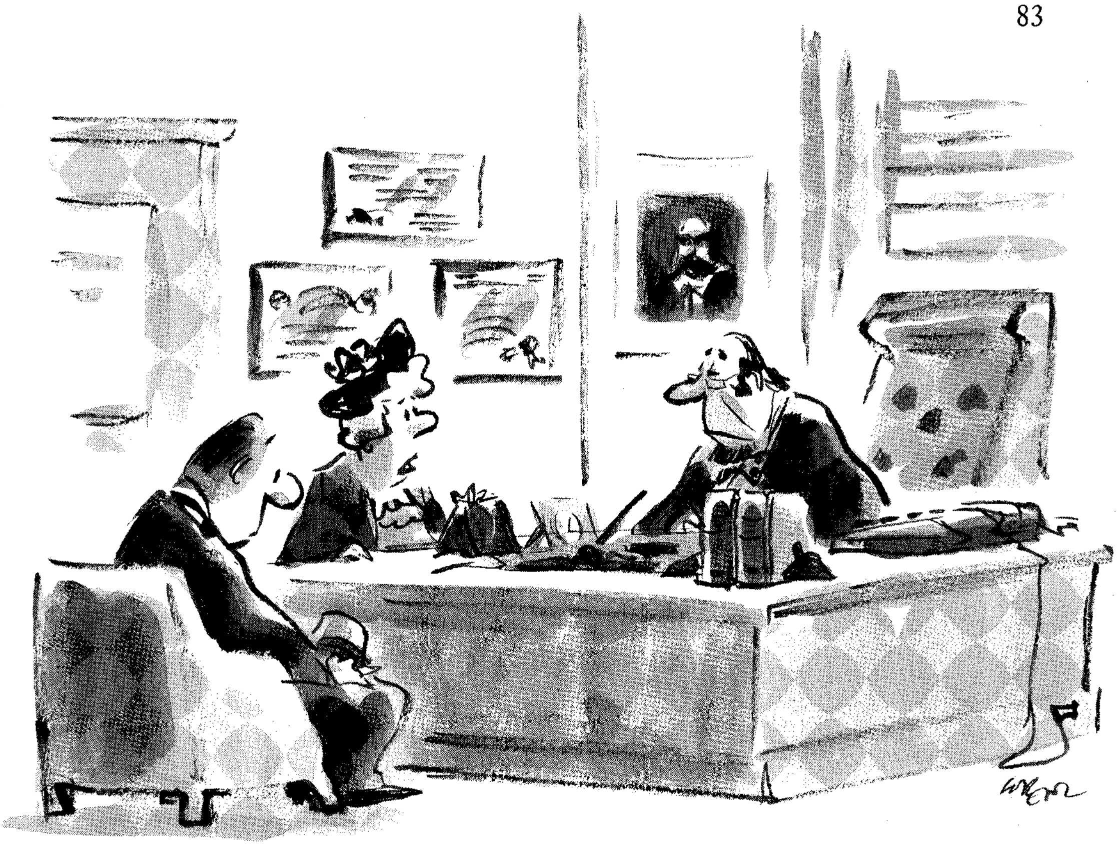
NICKLAUS: ALL THE WAY BACK

ALTHOUGH the Masters was first held in 1934, it was suspended in 1943, 1944, and 1945, because of the war, and this past April marked the fiftieth time that the tournament has been played. Appropriately, it was, even for an event that is known for its rousing finishes, the most dramatic Masters since 1935, when Gene Sarazen holed his 4-wood second shot for a double-eagle 2 on the par-5 fifteenth hole on the last round, enabling him to tie Craig Wood, whom he went on to defeat in the playoff. Jack Nicklaus's quite unbelievable drive to victory on the final ten holes at the Augusta National Golf Club this year must be regarded as nothing less than the most important accomplishment in golf since Bobby Jones's Grand Slam, in 1930. It raised to twenty the record number of major tournaments that Nicklaus has won since 1959, when, at nineteen, he carried off the United States Amateur championship on the East Course of the Broadmoor Golf Club, in Colorado Springs. (Bobby Jones, it hardly needs to be added, is Robert Tyre Jones, Jr., the founder of the Augusta National and the Masters, and the co-designer as well of the club's wonderful course.)

Masters week this year was one to savor and remember. After a heavy rain, punctuated by a hailstorm, on the Tuesday before the opening round of the tournament on Thursday, one lovely, bright Georgia spring day succeeded another. On Wednesday, when the main course was closed for practice in the afternoon, and the annual appetizer—the competition on the club's nine-hole par-3 course—was staged, most conversations centered on the unprecedented strength of the delegation of foreign golfers on hand. Along with the defending champion, Bernhard Langer, of West Germany, there was Severiano (Seve) Ballesteros, of Spain, who has won both the British Open and the Masters twice, taking the latter in 1980 and 1983; Sandy Lyle, of Scotland, the current British Open champion; Tze-chung Chen, of Taiwan, who almost won the United States Open last year; Greg Norman, the big, powerful Australian, who tied for first in our Open in 1984 but lost in a playoff with Frank (Fuzzy) Zoeller; and such sound golfers as the Australian veteran David Graham, who has won both our Open and our P.G.A. Championship, and two up-and-coming young men from South Africa, Denis Watson and Nick Price. Tom Watson, the American golfer with by far the best record over the last decade—he has won our Open once, the Masters twice, and the British Open five times—had shown only intermittent flashes of his top form last year and on the winter tour this year. In mid-February, in the tournament he had the best chance to win, the Hawaiian Open, he played a disappointing final round of 73, finishing with bogeys on the last two holes and ending up in a tie for third place. Watson, however, has the equipment to respond well to the challenge the Augusta National sets. A golfer who is both a long hitter and a deft putter, as Watson is, has a particular advantage on its tumbling fairways and its large, undulating greens.

Around four o'clock on that Wednesday afternoon, a group of us found seats in the grandstand behind the west practice range and watched some of the players getting in their final tune-up sessions. There are two practice ranges—one to the east and the other to the west of Magnolia Lane, which runs from Washington Road to the circle before the Southern Colonial clubhouse and is the main entranceway to the club. The area of the east practice range from which players in the Masters hit their shots is appreciably nearer to Washington Road than the teeing area on the west range, and when some of the most powerful hitters slugged a particularly prodigious drive they were able to clear the roadside fence. To put a halt to this, the Augusta National, in the summer of 1982, enlarged and improved the west practice range. While the members of the club are still permitted to use the east practice range, the contestants in the Masters have been asked since 1983 to practice only chip shots and bunker shots on that side of Magnolia Lane. When the renovated west practice range was first used by the Masters field, buckets of balls were provided by the club at a small building close by the range. This permitted a large number of players to practice simultaneously. It made it unnecessary then for a player to send his caddie out to shag the balls he hit from his own practice bag, and thus brought to an end one of the memorable features of the Masters: as the game's intense students watched a player hitting ball after ball right to his caddie standing in a field filled with other caddies, it brought home to them the amazing control, and the technical skill behind it, that golfers in the top echelon possess. On the west range today, there is ample room for between twelve and fifteen players to practice at the same time. If a player wants to shoot at a target, there are three greens, each with a flagstick, in the practice field—one a hundred yards out, the second a hundred and fifty yards out, and the third two hundred and twenty-five yards out. Very few balls are hit into Washington Road anymore. A net eleven feet high is positioned two hundred and forty-five yards from the teeing area, and any balls that fly over this net usually end up in a second net, just over twenty-three feet high, that rises fifteen yards beyond the first.

That Wednesday afternoon, the first player to catch our eye after we were settled in the grandstand behind the two-level practice tee was Sam Snead. He was wearing, as he generally does, a coconut-straw hat, and he was trying to help Curtis Strange take the club back a little less to the inside on the critical first two feet of the backswing. The fans in the grandstand were coaxing Snead, who turned seventy-four in late May, to hit some shots himself, but he ignored their entreaties, and walked over to watch Raymond Floyd hit a few shots and to have a chat with him. Floyd has been one of the most successful players in the game over the last ten years, but his swing is not a thing of beauty: he takes the club back on one plane and brings it down and through the ball on another plane. However, he is able to repeat this action on swing after swing, and that is what counts. Snead, finally yielding to the pleas of the gallery, casually picked up Floyd's 3-iron and, with his ineffable rhythm, hit a fine rising shot as he swung through to a picture-book finish just as sweetly as he used to in the nineteen-thirties, forties, fifties, and early sixties, when there was no swing in golf that could compare with his as an aesthetic delight. Snead's back, which has bothered him on and off over the last dozen years or so, was obviously not hurting him. (The next day, when he and Gene Sarazen, who is now eighty-four, were the tournament's Honorary Starters, Snead hit some of his drives enormous distances.)


"*It's not just me, Doctor. He's been turning away from the New York 'Times' as well.*"

• •

At about this moment, Ballesteros came walking blithely onto the tee and found an open position near the west end. This tall, handsome, and theatrical man seemed both relaxed and serious—in the perfect mood for practice. He had apparently decided how he would go about his final pre-tournament tune-up. As he hit three or four half-shots with his pitching wedge, allowing a comfortable period of time to elapse between them, he set up a pleasant practice pace that he was able to sustain for the next twenty-five minutes. Ballesteros may not win every tournament he enters, but he is generally regarded as the best golfer in the world today. One of the reasons for this is the superb way he sets himself up at the ball on shot after shot. His arms are nicely extended, and his shoulders are always square to the line of flight as he addresses the ball. On his backswing, he keeps a good proportion of his weight on his left side, and the base of his left shoulder remains as stable as the base of a golfer's shoulder can be on a backswing. As Ballesteros takes the club back, the weight on the inside of his right leg remains fixed in that position and his hip turn is properly restricted, but he has an extremely full shoulder turn. Sometimes he assists his very upright backswing by pre-cocking his hands as he takes the club back. He manages to retain the same unforced tempo as he starts his downswing. The angle of his upper back and the base of his shoulders to the line of flight in relation to his target remains relatively unchanged as he enters the hitting zone, and the momentum of his swing carries his club head through the ball, toward the target, and up into a well-balanced follow-through position. A modern Snead, he is something to behold. There is hardly a trace of effort in his swing, but he is one of the longest hitters in the game.

After Ballesteros had hit five full shots with his pitching wedge on the practice tee that afternoon, he played about the same number of shots with his other short irons, pausing to work a bit on the movement of his right arm and hand in his backswing prior to running through his medium irons. Then, after pausing again to make similar adjustments in his backswing, he ran through his long irons and his woods. He ended by sweeping six driver shots off the grass, and hit them flush. Not once, as he ran through the bag, did he take a divot. He just brushed the ball off the grass, as smoothly as Harry Vardon and Macdonald Smith used to. On his long irons and his woods, Ballesteros had speeded up his tempo a little, because the shafts of these clubs are longer and require a fuller arc, but his swing remained essentially the same. It was the best warmup session I have ever seen. Ballesteros seemed to be quite happy about it himself. Picking up what looked like a 7-iron, he hit a couple of running chips and followed them with two or three half-shots with his pitching wedge. Then, without saying a word to anyone, but looking, in a restrained way, rather pleased with life, he took a little hop onto the upper level of the practice tee and made his way to the locker room.

AFTER Ballesteros' departure, we shifted our attention to Jack Nicklaus, who was hitting out some balls at the west end of the upper level of the practice tee. He had been doing this for about ten minutes, turning around after each shot to get the opinion of his eldest son, Jack William Nicklaus II, who is twenty-four and is a graduate of the University of North Carolina. Jackie, as he is called, is no Jack Nicklaus, but he is a good enough golfer to have won the North and South Amateur championship, at Pinehurst, last year. An amiable, ear-

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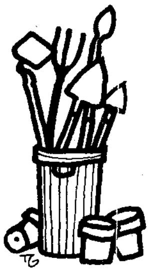
nest young man, he stands six feet five—five and a half inches taller than his father, whom he has caddied for in many tournaments. Over the years since 1980, when Nicklaus captured his fourth U.S. Open and his fifth P.G.A. Championship, he had not played up to his previous standard, and had won only two tournaments. In 1982, he led the field in the Colonial National Invitation, in Fort Worth; the second of his four sons, Steven, caddied for him on that occasion. In the spring of 1984, he won his own tournament, the Memorial, at the Muirfield Village Golf Club, in Dublin, Ohio, which is outside Columbus—the city where he was born and grew up. Nicklaus's eventual victory was set up by one of the most magnificent bogeys ever played in a formal competition. With two holes to go, Nicklaus and Andy Bean, who happened to be playing in a threesome with Chip Beck, were tied for the lead after Bean had birdied the sixteenth (or seventieth) hole. On the seventeenth, a long par 4, Bean hit a boomer down the fairway. Nicklaus then pushed his tee shot far to the right and out of bounds. The landing of the ball actually interrupted a cocktail party on the wooden deck of a house overlooking the course. After that aberration, Nicklaus, playing three from the tee, drove well. He fired a long iron twenty-five feet from the pin and then rolled in the putt for a 5. Bean had his par 4 all the way. On the eighteenth, after Nicklaus had holed from five feet for his par, Bean missed from four feet, and this brought on a sudden-death playoff. On the third extra hole, Bean missed another short putt for his par, and Nicklaus had won a tournament he had seemingly thrown away. Jackie had caddied for him that week. Father and son get along well. They have a good deal of respect for each other, and communicate easily. The last thing Jackie wants to do is to call attention to himself, and what he says to his father is spoken very softly. Earlier this year, Jackie was his father's amateur partner in the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, and, in the sections of the telecasts that showed the Nicklauses, Jackie played some impressive golf shots.



That Wednesday afternoon on the west practice tee, Nicklaus took thirty or forty seconds between shots, conversing with his son after each one. He was obviously in a discursive mood. Nicklaus was hitting what looked like 4-irons when we started to watch him. If you are a veteran Nicklaus-watcher, you can usually tell by how he sets up at the ball whether he (a) is not going to be able to make an authoritative swing, or (b) is uncertain about some phase of his swing and is trying to correct it, or (c) seems both relaxed and assured, which he did that afternoon. He had his weight on the inside of his left leg at address, and the rest of his body was tied in with this so naturally that you got the feeling he would be able to return to approximately the same position at impact and deliver a firm, square blow to the ball. That was what he was doing. He didn't look like the Nicklaus of 1980. He looked more like the Nicklaus of the 1965-70 period. It seemed that if he could make a few putts he might possibly put himself in the thick of the fight. On the other hand, he seemed to be considerably bulkier than he had been in some time.

Farther to the right on the practice tee, Tom Watson was using his driver, and using it well. He was not reaching too high with his hands and arms at the top of his backswing, as he sometimes does. He was swinging well within himself but developing extraordinary club-head speed, because of his fine footwork and the fast lateral movement of his hips, which leads him into and through the ball. Watson is a man of average size—he is five-nine and weighs a hundred and sixty—and the distance he can hit the ball amazes his fans anew each time they watch him play.

Nearby, Langer was playing some full shots with his middle irons. There was nothing wrong with the flight of the shots, but he seemed to be working too hard. He was dipping down with his hips as he took the club back and then raising them as he moved in to the ball. His method is usually more orthodox, and the full extension of his arms as he hits through the ball, particularly on his long irons and woods, helps one to understand how he hits the ball so far.

Of course, after one has watched Ballesteros practice nobody else seems to have any syrup in his swing. Late that Wednesday on the practice range, the man who came closest to it was Tsuneyuki (Tommy) Nakajima, the experienced Japanese professional. He was hitting some fairway woods with a controlled fade and was repeating the trajectory he patently wanted on shot after shot. It was about then that the group of observers I was with decided that it was probably time to leave. As we stretched our legs and got the kinks out of our arms and shoulders, we congratulated each other on our perspicacity in being in the right place at the right time.

ON Thursday, the day of the first round, the sky was broad and blue and almost cloudless, but a southwest wind that sometimes gusted to twenty-five miles an hour made the course very difficult to play. The golfers who had early starting times were fortunate, because by midafternoon the wind had dried the surface of the greens until they were so slick that the players had to putt them in a defensive way. On a putt of, say, twenty feet with only a minor break in it, instead of going for the hole most of the players concentrated on finding a way to roll the ball gently over the slippery surface so that it would expire close to the cup and leave them with a short putt, preferably uphill. The character of the greens at the Augusta National has changed radically since 1980, when the old Bermuda-grass greens were replaced by bent-grass greens. Since bent can be mowed appreciably shorter than Bermuda grass, a good, persistent wind that dries the greens out can make them very fast indeed. At the same time, when bent greens absorb as much water as the Augusta National's did during the heavy rains on Tuesday, they can remain soft and overly receptive for quite some time. On Thursday's round, for example, a 7-iron or 8-iron hit with average backspin would slightly indent the surface of a green when it landed on the face of a slope, and the ball would spin back some six or eight feet. If the ball then happened to catch a steep downslope—goodbye.

Today's top golfers are bigger and stronger than their predecessors, and they can lace the ball awesome distances. They also have a clear idea of what constitutes a correct golf swing. On Thursday, the day of the first round, the southwest wind happened to be blowing against the field on both the 465-yard thirteenth and the 500-yard fifteenth, the two short par 5s on the back nine, which have so often figured in the winning or losing of the Masters. Accordingly, few players tried to get home in two on the thirteenth, since it took a hard-hit second

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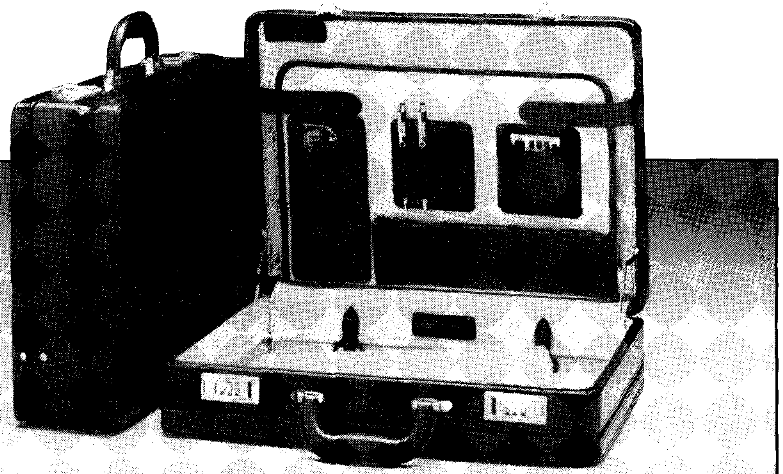

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to carry the arm of Rae's Creek that cuts in front of the green and then trails along its right edge. The same was true on the fifteenth: a real thruster of a second shot was needed to carry the pond in front of the green and a few yards below it. Tom Watson's round of 70, two strokes under par, was achieved because he reached the thirteenth in two with a 3-wood and then dropped a twenty-foot putt for an eagle. In addition, Watson, who is the author, with Nick Seitz, of an instruction book called "Getting Up and Down," got down in one putt on eight other holes. This tidy work transformed a round in which his iron play was erratic into a very useful one. Ballesteros also got home in two on the thirteenth with a well-struck 4-wood, and he two-putted from sixty feet for his birdie. He could have been luckier on the fifteenth. After laying up short of the pond with a 7-iron, he played a good-looking lob with his pitching wedge that landed just short of the green, but the ball spun back and rolled down the bank of the pond quite close to the water's edge. It took him three to get down from there. "One mental mistake at Augusta National is very good," he commented philosophically during his press interview, in which he touched on the high and low spots of a satisfactory round of 71.

Traditionally, it is the United States Open championship in which the lead on the first round is often held by golfers one has hardly heard of, but Ken Green and Bill Kratzert, the two players who shared the lead with 68s on the opening day of the Masters, are hardly household names. Kratzert, who has played the P.G.A. Tour for ten years, has a good deal of talent and a good deal of temper. Just before he teed off on his final practice round, he fired James Johnson, his caddie for the last two years, and asked Chuck Hofius, a friend of his from Fort Wayne, where he lives, to carry his bag. Kratzert had read the greens so well that he took only twenty-seven putts. Green, who qualified for the Masters by winning the 1985 Buick Open, didn't have your run-of-the-mill caddie, either. His sister, Shelley, having become bored with working as a bookkeeper, has caddied for him on the tour the last two years. It is hard to imagine that any other player has ever holed as many indecently long putts in the Masters as Green did on this round. Of his seven birdie putts, he made one from thirty-five feet, one from about forty feet, one from fifty feet, and one from seventy feet. His three other birdie putts were relative gimmes—a four-footer, a five-footer, and a twelve-footer. All in all, on the opening round sixteen golfers broke par, and two equalled it. Langer had a hardworking 74, as did Nicklaus. Several excellent golfers made little headway against the course; for example, Hale Irwin brought in a 76, Lanny Wadkins a 78, and Hal Sutton an 80.

One is apt to take the beauty of the Augusta National's course for granted. With the possible exception of Pine Valley, in New Jersey southeast of Philadelphia, it may be both the greenest and the best maintained of all the inland courses in the country. The fairways, Bermuda grass overseeded with rye, were in outstanding shape this April. The ball sat up nicely on them, and I can remember few players' having to cope with a really tight fairway lie. On the second day, as on the first, the condition of the fairways was a blessing, for the southwest wind was abroad again. It wasn't blowing quite as hard as it had on Thursday, but it did make the surface of the greens even glassier and faster than before. Mark McCumber had a 67 on this round, but in general the scores ran high.

One of the rigors of the Augusta National is that it has no let-up holes, on which a golfer can pick up his par almost automatically and use the time to think out the strategy he should use on the exacting holes ahead. More often than not, when a golfer seems to have played himself into position to bring in a low round that will rattle the field, he falters. For example, after Tom Watson had birdied the tenth, to go two under par on his second round and four under par for the tournament, a 69, or even a 68, that day seemed a good possibility, since he is a long hitter and would be getting a crack at the birdieable thirteenth and fifteenth holes. On the par-4 eleventh, however, he put his approach shot into the pond to the left of the green. He managed to escape with a bogey 5 by sinking a long putt. Watson is a first-class golfer, but on the celebrated twelfth, the 155-yard par 3 across Rae's Creek to a green that runs at a transverse to the tee and the fairway similar to the angle of the hands of a watch at two o'clock, he made the kind of error that a first-class golfer should not make: he misread the strength of the wind, and put his tee shot into Rae's Creek. A first-class golfer is bound to make errors, but on holes where a water hazard has to be carried he must be sure to get that much accomplished, because the penalty for making a mistake is so costly. Watson ended up with a triple-bogey 6 on the twelfth. Where he had been four under par for the tournament a half hour earlier, he was now even par. He played the last six holes in even par, to finish with a 74 and a total of 144 at the halfway mark, but, as he realized more keenly than anyone else, he had let a golden opportunity slip away.

R. MacMillan

Ballesteros made things look easy on his second round. He reached the 555-yard second hole with a gargantuan drive and a 6-iron approach to set up his first birdie. He birdied the short sixth from eight feet and the drive-and-pitch seventh by stopping his sand-wedge approach ten feet from the flag. He should have birdied the long eighth, for he was on the green in two, but he took three putts from thirty feet. He was somewhat less impressive on the second nine. On the thirteenth, he made his first real error of the day, when he half-topped his second shot—even as you and I might—and the ball bounded along the fairway and dived into the creek in front of the green. He had to settle for a bogey 6. On the fifteenth, he turned things around. After a long drive into the wind, he ripped a 4-wood twenty-five feet from the pin and made the putt for his eagle 3. He bogeyed the short sixteenth, where he was bunkered, but he got that stroke back by knocking in a twenty-five-foot birdie putt on the last green. This gave him a 68—33 out and 35 back—and put him in the lead, with a total of 139 at the halfway mark. The key to his round, Ballesteros later explained to the press, was that he had kept his shots to the green below the pin on all but two holes,

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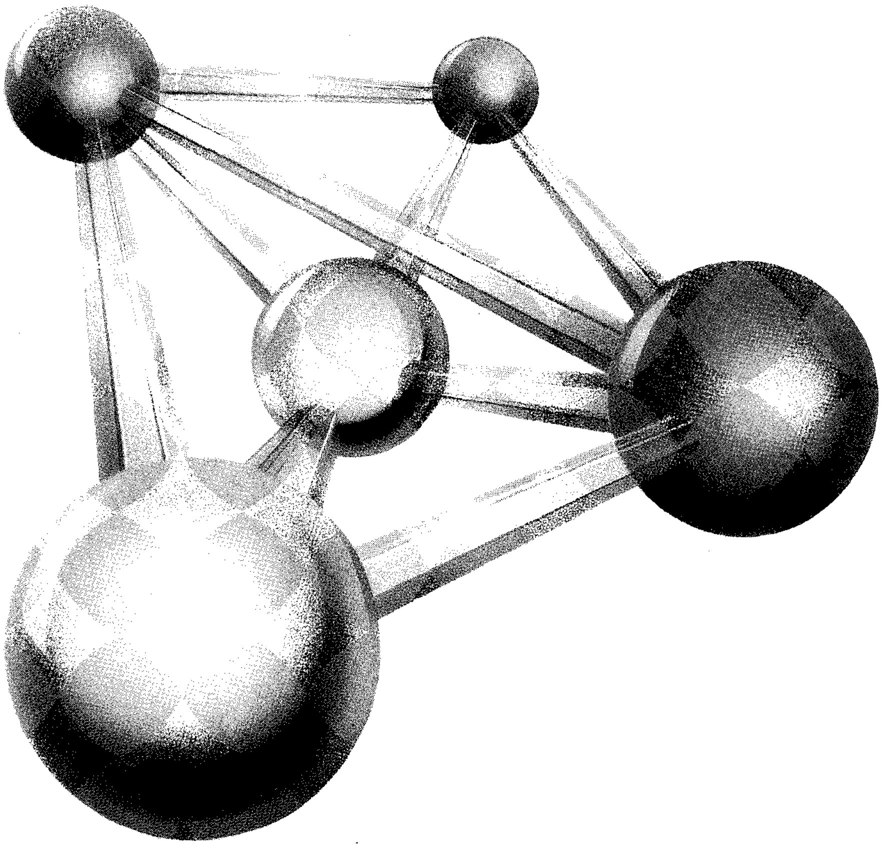

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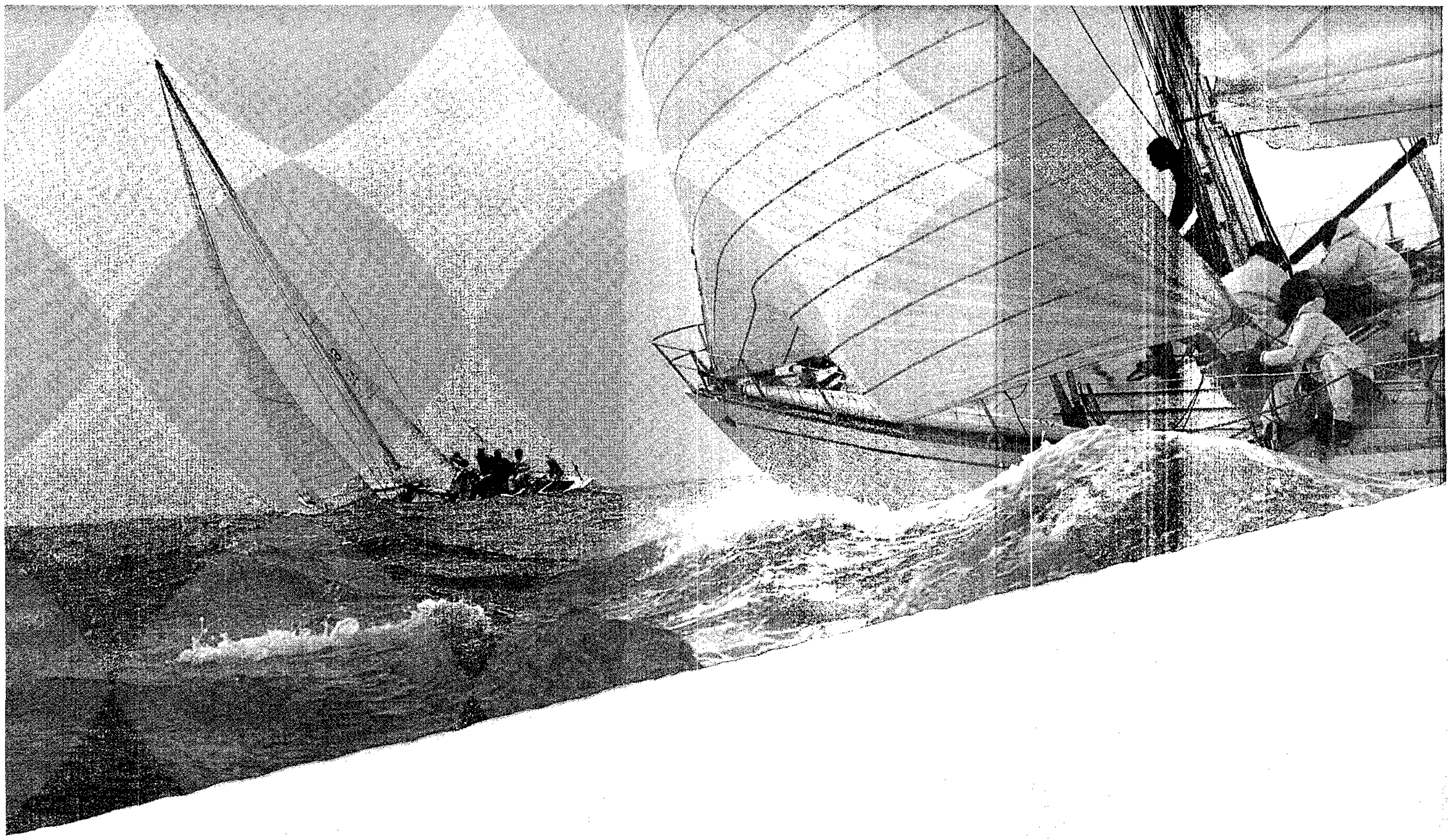

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leaving himself uphill putts whenever possible.

Of the total of eight players who stood at 142 or lower after the second round, five were foreign golfers: Ballesteros and Nakajima (70-71) at 141; Langer (74-68), Norman (70-72), and T. C. Chen (69-73) at 142. (Tze-ming, or T. M., Chen, his brother, with rounds of 79 and 81, had missed the cut.) This doesn't necessarily mean that the quality of American golf is in a parlous state but, rather, that golf has become a much more international game. Nicklaus, at 145, was well under the cutoff mark, after a 71 on which he made no putts of any length. Three of the comparatively young American golfers who had won tournaments on the tour this winter—Corey Pavin, Donnie Hammond, and Bob Tway—made the cut. (Tway, who had played rounds of 70 and 73, was followed both days by a crowd of supporters who wore T-shirts identifying them as members of "Tway's Twoops.")

THERE was a sharp change in playing conditions on Saturday, the day of the third round. The southwest wind had departed, and the air was still and much more humid than it had been on the first two days. As a result, the greens were decidedly slower, and, along with this, few of the pins had been placed in exacting positions. A number of the golfers who brought in low rounds remarked afterward that they couldn't remember a day when the Augusta National had played so easy. One of them said, "You didn't have to worry whether or not you had exactly the right club or if it was dangerous to go for the pin on an approach shot. The greens were holding, and, on top of that, you could putt aggressively."

About midway through the afternoon, it was apparent that Nick Price, who had followed an opening 79 with a 69, was taking the course apart. Paired with Bruce Lietzke, Price, four over par after his first two rounds, had teed off at 11:56. Through the giant leader boards, one of the most individual signatures of the Masters, the galleries are kept wonderfully au courant with what is happening all over the course. There are twelve leader boards in all: five large ones (seventeen by thirty-four feet); five medium-sized ones (twelve by twenty-four); and two small ones (eight by sixteen). Each holds the name and the standing in relation to par for the tournament of the ten leaders. Whenever a golfer goes off on a protracted scoring streak and stands a greater number of strokes under par for the tournament than some player whose name and hole-by-hole scores for that round are listed on the leader boards, changes are quickly made on all twelve leader boards. Through an ingenious system of scoring originated at the Masters in 1960, the spectators can perceive in an instant the relative standing of the golfers who are out in front: a green figure indicates the number of strokes a golfer is over par for the tournament after playing a hole; a green zero indicates that he stands even par for the tournament after that hole; a red figure indicates the number of strokes he is under par for the tournament after that hole. I was watching the action at the Amen Corner, where one can take in the play on both the eleventh and twelfth holes and the drives and second shots on the thirteenth as well, when the name and hole-by-hole scores of one of the leaders at the start of the round—Danny Edwards, I believe—were taken down from the large leader board that stands on the far side of the eleventh hole, near the green, and in their place Price's name and hole-by-hole scores through the seventeenth went up: a green 5 (he had bogeyed the first hole) was followed by a green 4 (he had birdied the second); two more green 4s (he had parred the third and fourth holes); a green 3 (he had birdied the fifth); a green 2 (he had birdied the sixth); another green 2; and two green 1s. Price had played the first nine in 33, with a bogey on the first, birdies on the second, fifth, sixth, and eighth, and pars on the third, fourth, seventh, and ninth. Then his scores for the second nine went up, and most of us gasped: a green 0, a red 1, a red 2, a red 3, another red 3, a red 4, a red 5, and another red 5. Shortly after this, still another red 5 appeared. Then one knew that Price had started the second nine by ripping off four birdies in a row, and, after parring the fourteenth, had birdied the fifteenth and sixteenth before finishing with pars on the seventeenth and eighteenth. He had played the second nine in 30, and his 63 was a new course record. The previous record, 64, had been established by Lloyd Mangrum in 1940 and had been equalled by Nicklaus, Irwin, Maurice Bembridge, Gary Player, and Miller Barber.

During the long afternoon, no golfer came close to matching the brilliance of Price's round, but there were three 67s, seven 68s, and seven 69s. One of the 69s belonged to Nicklaus, whose name went up on the leader boards for the first time during the tournament after he birdied the eighth, ninth, eleventh, and twelfth holes, to go four under par on this round and three under par for the tournament. His name remained on the leader boards after he bogeyed the thirteenth and went on to par the last five holes. (On the thirteenth, Nicklaus's second shot, a 2-iron, had landed on the far bank of the creek in front of the green and then rolled back into the hazard.) Like many of the other players who had broken 70 on the third round, Nicklaus was hardly jubilant about his score, because the course was not the tough adversary it generally is. "I've played about the same every day," he said matter-of-factly. "I'll have a better chance at making putts if it rains tonight and slows the greens slightly, but if it's easier for me it'll be easier for a lot of the other fellows."

In retrospect, the most significant round of the day was played by Ballesteros. After stopping his pitch to the third, a short par 4, four feet from the cup and then sinking his putt for a birdie, he had not taken advantage of the opportunities that the course presented on this windless day. Beginning at the fourth, he ran off eleven straight pars, but this was not what one expected of him under the conditions. There was no boldness to his play. He had holed no putts of any length, but, on the other hand, he did not put any of his approaches tight to the flag from the fourth hole on. He roused himself on the fifteenth: he reached the green in two, and got down in two for his birdie. After he parred the short sixteenth, the general feeling was that Ballesteros was neither in his best form nor in a scoring mood. He would probably be satisfied

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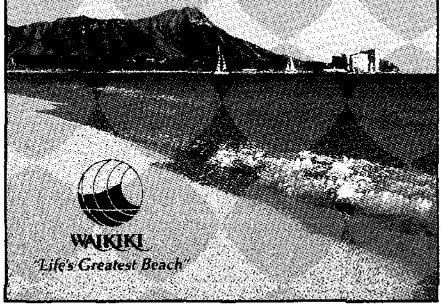

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to par the last two holes. That would give him a 70, and he would still be leading the field by a stroke.

Then the unexpected happened. On the seventeenth, a 400-yard par 4, he followed a three-hundred-yard drive with a rather poor pitch, which rolled well past the pin to the back of the green. He left his approach putt eight feet short, and when he missed that putt he had bogeyed a hole he had been in a position to birdie after his monstrous drive. On the eighteenth, a 405-yard par 4 that runs uphill to a two-level green, Ballesteros drove with a 3-wood. He had a 7-iron left to the flag. When he played a somewhat diffident approach shot into the bunker protecting the front left section of the green, he was on his way to another bogey and a round of 72—even par. There is no accounting for the hot rounds, the cold rounds, and the mediocre rounds that golfers play. This was the same man who three days before had given such a classic exhibition on the practice tee of how to hit the golf ball, the same man who had won many championships by his arresting golf down the stretch. On this third round, for some reason, he had simply lost his concentration on the last two holes. There was no knowing which Ballesteros we would see on the final round. At any rate, the leader at the close of the third round was Greg Norman—the White Shark, as he is called, because he grew up on the beaches of Queensland, where sharks remain a hazard, and also because he has platinum-blond hair. With five pars and four birdies on the second nine, he had brought in a 68 (36-32), for a three-round total of 210. Fourteen players were within four strokes of Norman. Price, Langer, Hammond, and Ballesteros were only a stroke off the pace, at 211. Watson, Nakajima, and Tom Kite were two strokes back, at 212. Danny Edwards, Gary Koch, McCumber, Tway, Pavin, and Nicklaus were bunched at 214. None of them could be counted out.

That evening, as we learned later, Nicklaus received a phone call from his son Steven. Steven works for John Montgomery, who is the head of a company that organizes and directs golf tournaments, including the Deposit Guaranty Golf Classic, formerly called the Magnolia Classic, which is played the week of the Masters in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, by a field composed chiefly of the touring professionals who failed to qualify for the Masters. Steve wanted to know what score his father thought he would have to shoot in order to win the Masters.

"Oh, a 66 or a 65," his father said.

"That's the number I've been thinking of, Pops," Steve replied.

THE weather and the playing conditions on Sunday, the day of the final round, were similar to what they had been on Saturday. There was no trace of a breeze. The air was a bit muggier, if anything. The greens were firmer, but they putted a touch slower. With fourteen players within four strokes of Norman, the leader, it was hard to decide whom to watch, but most people felt that they had to keep an eye on the last five twosomes until some contender mounted a rally that put him out in front and made it mandatory to observe his progress until a new challenger broke out of the pack. Lyle and Nicklaus, the fifth-from-the-last twosome, teed off at 1:32 and were followed, at eight-minute intervals, by Watson and Nakajima, Kite and Ballesteros, Hammond and Langer, and Norman and Price, in that order.

For quite some time, none of the players in the hunt did anything spectacular. Langer birdied the second, to tie Norman for the lead, but he began to slide back on the seventh and was not in the running after that. I was down near the sixth green when Nicklaus, who was even par for the day after the first five holes, stopped a high 5-iron four and a half feet from the cup on the par-3 sixth, but he misread the putt. On the seventh, a short par 4, he smashed a big tee shot down the fairway. He was hitting the ball extremely well for a forty-six-year-old man, but what impressed me, as it never fails to do, was the extraordinary composure he was able to sustain under the gnawing pressure of a very important event. As someone once put it, Nicklaus is more relaxed surrounded by thousands of frantic fans on the last round of a hectic major competition than most people are while they're watching the telecast of that tournament in their living rooms.

When Norman came to the sixth, he was even par for the round after scrambling for his pars on the first four holes. On the sixth, he played a 5-iron seven feet from the pin and dropped the birdie putt, increasing his lead on the closest man to two strokes. Then, suddenly, salvos of excited applause began to go up all over the course. Ballesteros birdied the seventh to move to six under par for the tour-

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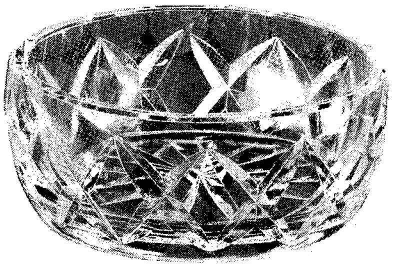

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nament. On the par-5 eighth, an uphill slog of five hundred and fifty-five yards, Kite, who was playing with Ballesteros, holed an eighty-yard pitch for an eagle. This put him five under par for the tournament. Only moments later, Ballesteros holed a fifty-yard pitch for *his* eagle. This put him eight under par for the tournament and out in front all by himself. When Ballesteros failed to get his par on the ninth, however, he fell back into a tie with Norman, at seven under.

During Ballesteros' dash, Nicklaus got one of his own going. On the ninth, a 435-yard par 4 to a slippery plateau green, he planted his approach with a pitching wedge eleven feet from the pin and made the putt for his birdie. The tenth, a 485-yard par 4 that is enclosed by stands of tall pines on both sides of the fairway and behind the green, is one of the Augusta National's most beautiful and testing holes. The fairway tumbles down a long hillside and then rises abruptly to a green streaked with shadows and bunkered on the right. I saw Nicklaus's 4-iron approach sit down on the green about twenty-five feet from the pin, and then hurried to that great vantage point the juncture of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth. On the leader board on the far side of the eleventh, a red 4 for Nicklaus had gone up in the slot for the tenth hole: he had made that twenty-five-footer for his birdie. On the eleventh, hitting the ball as far as the Nicklaus of old, he whacked a huge tee shot down the right side on this 455-yard, par-4 hole, whose gently sloping fairway suddenly plunges abruptly down to a cape-type green that is menaced along its left side by a small pond. Nicklaus was out so far that the pond did not concern him at all. He had only an 8-iron left. He played a good-looking pitch, which was a shade too strong and finished twenty feet past the pin. Without staying fixed over his putt as long as he sometimes does, he rapped the ball into the middle of the cup. After that birdie, his third in a row, he was three under for the day and five under for the tournament. As he walked up to the twelfth tee, he received a tremendous round of applause from the thousands of spectators who always jam that distant corner of the course. Few of them had expected this determined rally by the old champion. He had played such shabby golf in the seven winter tournaments he had entered that his best finish had been a tie for thirty-ninth place in the

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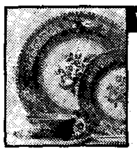

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Hawaiian Open. Now, somehow or other, he had got things going, and the thousands packed at the far corner let him know the depth of their pleasure and appreciation.

The pin on the twelfth was in its customary fourth-round position: it was tucked in the back right corner of the green about twenty feet beyond the short, precipitous bank that separates the green from Rae's Creek. No wind seemed to be stirring, but players familiar with the Augusta National are aware that even on the calmest day unpredictable wisps of wind have been known to sweep suddenly across the twelfth from behind the green. Nicklaus didn't like the idea of trafficking with the right half of the diagonal green, and he elected to play the shot he reserves for these occasions—a low, soft 7-iron aimed at the left-hand tongue of the green. He would be content with a par. He hit the ball a shade too hard, though, and it finished in the fringe just over and slightly below the green. Instead of two-putting for his par, he would have to get down in a chip and putt. He took his pitching wedge and hit a pretty fair chip. It rolled dead six feet to the left of the hole, but a six-foot putt on the Augusta National's greens is never easy to make. Nicklaus missed this one on the right. He was back to four under par. To be candid, at this stage of the tournament I didn't think that he had a chance to win it. I was simply delighted to see him playing first-class golf again.

Shortly after this, Ballesteros, seven under par through the tenth and still tied for the lead with Norman, came into view with Kite, who was still five under, on the eleventh fairway. Ballesteros played a rather conventional par, but Kite, attacking the pin, stopped a 5-iron six feet from it and rolled in the putt, to go six under par. Both players parred the twelfth. I elected not to wait for Norman, who had dropped to five under par when he double-bogeyed the tenth, but to follow Ballesteros and Kite down the thirteenth. (I later learned that Norman's troubles on the tenth began when he hooked his approach shot well to the left of the green. On his third shot, his swing was restricted by a tree close behind his ball, and he jabbed the ball across the green and into the bunker on the right.)

More often than not, it is a good policy to follow the man who is leading the tournament. I should add at this point that Nicklaus had made his birdie on the thirteenth—on in two and down in two—to get back to five under par. The cheers that had gone up for him from the crowd clustered near the green were so loud and intense that I thought he might have eagled the hole.

The field was having no trouble getting home in two on the thirteenth that afternoon, but the pin was set in a ticklish position that made for fewer birdies than usual on this short par 5. The right side of the green sits below a slope of about two feet up to the center and the left side. On this round, the pin was placed on the right side, not intimidatingly close to the swinging arm of Rae's Creek but in a position where golfers who had played for the center of the green or had wound up on the left side of it discovered that their approach putt invariably picked up a surprising amount of speed as it slid down the slope, and that it frequently ended up well past the pin. Ballesteros played his second before Kite, who had cut the corner with a brave drive. Playing a fairly long iron, Ballesteros came through with the ideal shot: the ball landed just to the right of the center of the green, bounced, and ran about twenty-five feet; then, just before it expired, it caught the downslope and rolled almost at a right angle toward the pin, as if drawn by a magnet. It stopped seven or eight feet away, short of the pin and slightly above it. Kite played his second with what looked like a 4-iron. He usually hits the ball high, and this shot landed at the front of the right side of the green and rolled only a couple of yards. He subsequently got down in two putts for his birdie, and went seven under for the tournament. A pleasant young man who has seldom played his best stuff when he has been in contention on the last round of a big tournament, he was finally doing himself justice this day. Ballesteros, after studying his putt, allowed for a slight left-to-right break, and holed it for an eagle 3. This put him nine strokes under par. At that moment, he held a two-stroke lead on Kite and a four-stroke lead on Norman and Nicklaus. The way Ballesteros was playing, I thought at this time that he would win the tournament—he seemed to be genuinely confident, and he was too far out in front to be overtaken by anyone but Kite. I watched as he and Kite belted good drives up the fourteenth, and walked over to the fifteenth green, which is only a short distance from the thirteenth. Nicklaus would be coming through shortly.

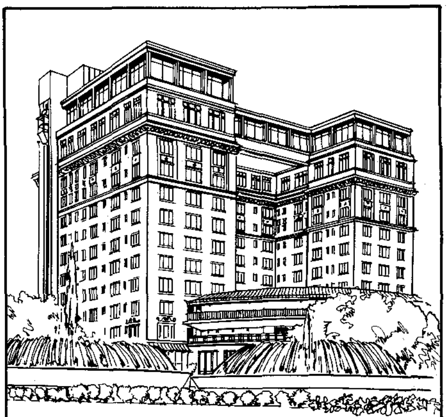
Back in 1965, when Nicklaus, in winning his second Masters, set a record-low four-round total of 271, Jones made his customary observant and gracious remarks at the presentation ceremonies in congratulating Nicklaus on his superlative performance. He described some of Nicklaus's feats during the four rounds, and, in a reference to the colossal distances Nicklaus had hit the ball, he said, "Jack is playing an entirely different game—a game I'm not even familiar with." On the fourth round of the 1986 Masters, Nicklaus's drive on the fifteenth bounded over the crest of the hill and finished on the downslope fairly close to the spot where his tee shot had stopped on his third round in the 1965 Masters, when he made his record-tying 64. Nicklaus was one of the first golfers to carry with him a chart of each of the par-4 and par-5 holes of various courses, on which he had written down the distance in yards to the front and back of each green from certain points in the fairway. He still carries a distance chart. By his estimate, he was now two hundred and two yards from the flag, which was set in about the middle of the fifteenth green. He played a high 4-iron that covered the flag. The ball landed a few yards in front of the flag and rolled twelve feet past it and to the left. As Nicklaus later explained—unaware that he was displaying the memory of an elephant—he knew that the putt he had would break about sixteen inches to the right, because he had missed the same putt in the 1975 Masters. This day, his putt broke to the right, caught the right corner of the cup, and dropped, for an eagle 3. You can imagine the yells and shrieks that followed.

AFTER that eagle, Nicklaus stood seven under par for the tournament. Now, if either Ballesteros or Kite faltered, he could conceivably win the tournament. The reason the crowds were pulling so strenuously for him, apart from his feats at the Masters in earlier years, was the sensational nature of the shots he was producing on this gripping fourth round. On the par-3 sixteenth, a hundred and seventy yards long, the green rises a few feet above a large pond. Here Nicklaus hit another great shot. The flag was positioned at the extreme left side of the green, about fifteen feet beyond the far edge of the pond. Nicklaus hit a 5-iron that was right at the flag. The ball struck the green about hole-high three feet to the right of the flag, took a little hop forward, and then barely missed the hole as it spun back and finished about three feet in front of the cup. Knowing what thunderous applause would follow when Nicklaus holed for his birdie, Watson and Nakajima, close by on the fifteenth green, decided that it would be prudent to wait until Nicklaus had putted before putting out themselves. Just below the crown of the hill on the fifteenth, Ballesteros and Kite stood beside their drives, taking in the scene. Nicklaus rolled in his birdie putt. The crowd erupted with prolonged applause and wild cries. As Nicklaus said later, he was so affected by the galleries' support that it brought tears to his eyes, and he had to remind himself that there was more golf to be played and he had to keep his mind on that.

When Watson and Nakajima had moved off the fifteenth green, Kite hit his second safely over the pond—its far bank is five yards or so from the front edge of the green. Kite's ball came down softly on the front of the green and got very little roll. He was left with a birdie putt of some twenty feet. Ballesteros had driven just about three hundred and ten yards. He was a hundred and ninety yards from the flag, and decided to go with his 4-iron. The way he set himself up at the ball led one to think that he had decided to fade his shot in from left to right and try to have it fall like a handkerchief on the green. Something went wrong on his swing. He took the club back as if he were going to play a fade, but his downswing was terribly hurried and cramped, and he may have closed the club head at impact. At the finish of his swing, only his left hand had hold of the club. I really don't know what happened, but the ball was not hit either hard or cleanly, and it was pulled to the left in a low trajectory. One knew a moment later that it wouldn't carry the pond. It splashed in the water about fifteen feet short of the far bank. Everyone was stunned. Then there were groans and gleeful shouts and all kinds of speculation. Ballesteros and Kite made their way slowly down the hillside. No one knew why Ballesteros, who generally thrives on pressure, had played such an utterly untypical shot in that important situation, but everyone knew instantly that this was a different tournament. Only seconds before, people had been thinking about the number of strokes Ballesteros would have in hand if he birdied or parred the fifteenth. Now they knew that Nicklaus's final round was more than just a gallant run at the leader. He was in a position to win his sixth Masters.

Ballesteros, going about things quietly and calmly, conferred with the member of the Masters rules committee who was handling the fifteenth hole. He then exercised the option of playing his upcoming fourth stroke by dropping a ball on the left side of the fairway about twenty yards back from the front edge of the pond, thus observing the rule that a golfer can play his next stroke however far back he chooses from the water hazard he was in as long as, in dropping his new ball, he keeps the point at which his previous shot last crossed the margin of the hazard on the line between his new position and the flagstick. He lofted a wedge pitch short of the pin, but the ball ran some seventeen feet past. He was down in two putts for a 6. He was now eight under par for the tournament and in a triple tie for first with Kite and Nicklaus.

Ten minutes or so before this, when Nicklaus was on the tee of the seventeenth, about to address his drive, he heard a loud roar and backed off the ball. It was a funny sound, and for a while he didn't know what had happened. Then he was told that Ballesteros had hit his approach into the pond on the fifteenth. On the seventeenth, Nicklaus played his first wayward drive since the second hole, hooking the ball into the rough on the left. The seventeenth, which many people consider the poorest hole on the Augusta National, is a 400-yard par 4 on which the narrow fairway, spotted with pines in the rough on the left and thick with pines along the right, slowly climbs a hill of deceptive length to a green that is invisible to most golfers on their second shot, because of the steep front wall of a large bunker that almost totally blocks the entrance to the green from the fairway. On this day, the pin was placed at the back right corner of the green. This is a difficult pin position, for an approach shot hit past the pin and to the left of it can catch a downslope that will carry the ball yards away. Nicklaus was fortunate in that his drive ended up in light rough midway between two



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pine trees. From there, he played an exceedingly good shot with his pitching wedge, which finished about hole-high some eleven feet to the left of the pin and slightly below it. Studying the putt with Jackie, Nicklaus felt certain that from previous experience he knew the line to the hole from that spot. He stroked the ball up the slope. When it was about three feet from the cup, he knew it was going in, and raised his putter. When the ball fell, he broke into an exultant smile. Multitudinous waves of applause. That birdie put Nicklaus nine under par. For the first time, he was actually leading the tournament.

Fully aware that he couldn't afford to make any mistakes on the eighteenth, the arduous 405-yard, par-4 finishing hole, Nicklaus was even more deliberate than usual in preparing himself for his tee shot. The narrow fairway, which dips quickly and then slowly rises, is bordered by woods on both sides for about two hundred and forty-five yards. Then it starts to bend to the right and begins its gradual climb to the green. A golfer who hits the ball as far as the competitors in the Masters do must play a left-to-right tee shot to be sure of staying in the fairway. If he hits his drive hard and straight, the ball will end up in one of two bunkers on the far side of the fairway. Nicklaus went with a 3-wood off the tee and hit a low liner that had just the touch of fade it needed. On the last day of the Masters, the pin on the eighteenth is usually tucked behind the bunker that guards the left side of the lower terrace of the green. This year, possibly because the upper terrace had been enlarged since the 1985 Masters, the pin was placed in the center of the upper terrace, at the back of the green. The lower terrace had been raised a bit during the alterations on the green in order to make the slope between its two levels less severe, but, as every player appreciated, when the pin is spotted on the upper terrace, that is where you want to land your approach shot. Nicklaus took a 5-iron for his second. His shot was right at the flag, but it landed near the bottom of the slope and trickled back a good ten feet. He was left with a very difficult forty-footer. I wondered if he had practiced that putt. Knowing how thoroughly he prepares for a major tournament, I felt that he probably had. This became irrelevant after Nicklaus's approach putt breasted the slope dead on line for the hole and stopped only four inches short of it. He tapped the ball in for his par, a 65, and a four-round total of 279, nine under par. As he walked off the green, he and Jackie hugged each other, and each threw an arm around the other's shoulders as they made their way through the noisy, gratified gallery.

IT took many of us a moment or two to realize that the tournament wasn't over simply because Nicklaus had made his par. There were players still out on the course who might tie or beat his mark. Nicklaus was taken to the Jones Cabin, where he would have some privacy as he watched the last four twosomes on television.

In no time at all, Watson and Nakajima were putting out on the last green, and Ballesteros and Kite were coming up the eighteenth. The grapevine and the leader board on the eighteenth spread the word that Ballesteros had three-putted the seventeenth to slip to seven under par, and that Kite had parred the two previous holes, to remain at eight under par. If he could birdie the eighteenth, he would tie Nicklaus. Kite hit the fairway with his tee shot, then played a gutty second—a high-arching shot, typical of his approaches. It came down on the first few inches of the upper terrace to the right of the hole, and rolled to a halt twelve feet from it. What are one's thoughts and feelings when a fine young man like Thomas O. Kite, Jr., a member of the 1971 Walker Cup team and, after turning professional in 1972, a member of four Ryder Cup teams, the winner of the Bob Jones Award for sportsmanship in 1979, and a golfer who has won numerous tournaments but has only once before, in the 1984 Masters, threatened to win a major title, has a crack at a twelve-footer to tie Jack Nicklaus with a final round of 67? I guess one says to oneself, and means it, that if Tom Kite can make the putt, good for him. He came within a quarter of an inch of dropping that touchy twelve-footer. The ball was headed for the middle of the cup until the final eight inches, when it swerved ever so slightly to the left and settled on the lip of the cup. After the golf that Kite had come up with on the last round, it should be pointed out that he had never played with such heart before in a major tournament, and that he will be a better player than ever in the future.

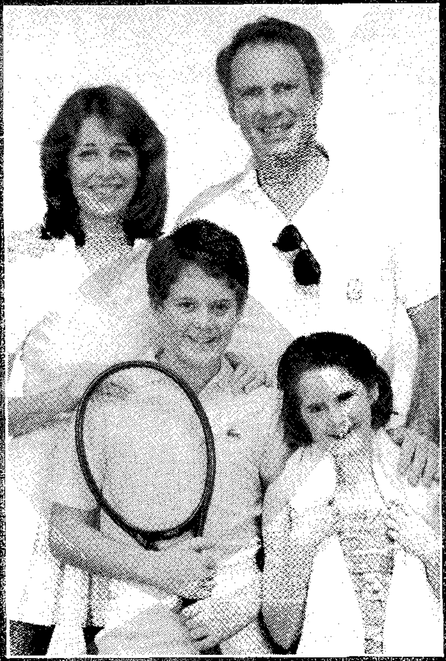
d. ehrenberg

Before one had fully assimilated Kite's terrific bid, Hammond and Langer had completed their rounds, and Price and Norman appeared at the foot of the eighteenth fairway. Together, the grapevine and the leader board spread the information that Norman had surged to nine under par by birdieing the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth. He had holed from about twelve feet on the fourteenth and from twelve feet on the seventeenth. On the sixteenth, like Nicklaus, he had come close to holing his tee shot. On the eighteenth, he had split the fairway with a 3-wood off the tee, and was playing a 4-iron on his second. If he made his par 4, he would tie Nicklaus. If he birdied the hole, he would win the tournament. From the way Norman set himself up on his approach shot, it looked as if he were trying to play a high left-to-right shot. Something went wrong in the execution of his swing. It was oddly reminiscent of Ballesteros' inability to perform the swing he had in mind on his 4-iron to the fifteenth green. Norman took the club back a shade outside the line, with the face slightly opened, but as he started his downswing he accelerated so quickly that he lost his balance and his footing—his right heel actually slid back, and the toe left the ground—and though he somehow managed to hit the ball hard, it headed far to the right of his intended target and came down in the gallery about twenty yards to the right of the green. From there, Norman improvised a well-played chip-and-run, which curled onto the back of the green and stopped sixteen feet above the hole. He had to make that putt to tie Nicklaus. If anyone has amassed the proper credentials for winning a major tournament, it is Norman, a husky all-around athlete who has won the Australian Open, the French Open, and the Canadian Open, and who came very close to winning the U.S. Open in 1984. Norman started golf when he was sixteen, and in two years he went from a twenty-seven-handicap hacker to a scratch golfer, largely thanks to two instruction books his mother gave him—"Golf My Way" and "My 55 Ways to Lower Your Golf Score," both by Jack Nicklaus. On the eighteenth green, Norman carefully studied that putt he had to hole to tie Nicklaus. When he tapped the ball, it was almost immediately apparent that he had pulled it slightly off line. Norman received a generous ovation, but how hard it must be to fire four birdies in a row down the stretch, have a shot at winning the tournament with one more birdie, and then fail to make the par needed to force a playoff!

One other thing. No one could have behaved in a more sportsmanlike manner than Ballesteros did on the last four holes, after he had, in effect, thrown away a tournament that he had seemed to have in his grasp. Ballesteros is a puzzlement—a highly emotional man whose attitudes are inconsistent—but on the finishing holes he did himself proud by his graciousness toward the galleries, who had been pulling for Nicklaus throughout the long afternoon.

AFTER going through the ceremonies held in the Butler Cabin for the television audience and, following that, the formal presentation ceremonies on the large practice green close by the clubhouse, Nicklaus went to the Masters Interview Facility, which, of course, was filled to overflowing, and spoke about his last round, the tournament, and himself in a genial and straightforward manner. In the audience were his wife, Barbara; his mother, Helen; his sister, Marilyn Hutchinson; and his uncle, Frank Nicklaus. The family member one especially missed was his father, Charles, who died in 1970. More than any other person, Charlie Nicklaus was responsible for his son's passion for sports and his understanding that sports played without sportsmanship are nothing.

Nicklaus talked for well over an hour, pausing from time to time to answer questions. He spoke of the pleasure he gets from playing golf with his five children, who range in age from twenty-four to twelve. "My kids keep me playing golf," he said. He went through his final round shot by shot. For example, he felt that the hole that really got him going was the twelfth, which he had bogeyed. "Yesterday, I birdied twelve and got defensive," he explained. "Today, after my bogey there, I felt I needed to get aggressive." He knew that a lot of people thought that golfers who are forty-six years old don't win the Masters. He also realized how badly he had played in the tournaments he en-



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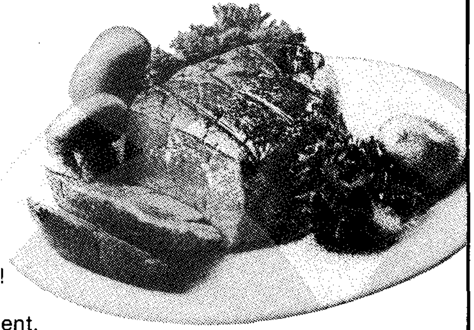

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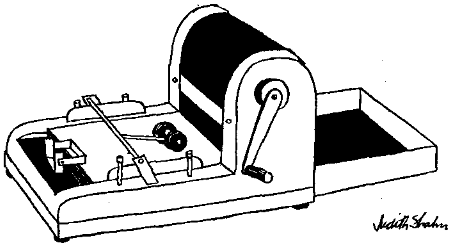
tered this winter. At that time, he had said to himself, "I'm not going to go out of golf playing golf the way I am now." He paused, then added, with a laugh, "I'm not retiring, guys." At that point, after being notified that the prize money for winning the Masters was a hundred and forty-four thousand dollars, he said, with a rueful smile, that this brought his total winnings for 1986 to a hundred and forty-eight thousand dollars. He said that his son Jackie had recently worked on his pitching and chipping with Chi Chi Rodriguez, and that after Jackie showed him what he had learned from Rodriguez he began to chip beautifully himself. He said that he was immensely indebted to the support of the galleries. The spectators at the 1986 Masters ranked with those at Muirfield in 1972, at St. Andrews in 1978, and at Baltusrol in 1980 in the encouragement they had given him. "The sound coming from green to tee was absolutely deafening," he said softly. He felt that Jackie had done a wonderful job of spurring him on during the last round: "He was always telling me, 'Let's get this birdie,' 'Hold your head still on this putt,' 'O.K., let's get going,' and things like that." He talked about how well he had putted on the last round with his new, large-faced, offset putter. It had felt good in his hands from the ninth green on. In answer to a question, he said that his weight had gone up to around a hundred and ninety pounds from a hundred and seventy last year, which he thought was too light for golf. A hundred and ninety, though, might be five pounds more than he would like to weigh. He wanted to mention that after his terrible golf in the Doral Open he had brought his problems to Jack Grout. (Grout taught Nicklaus how to play golf when he was ten, and he has been Nicklaus's only teacher throughout his career, although Phil Rodgers worked with him on his pitching and chipping a few years back.) When he went to see Grout this year, Nicklaus said, he couldn't hit an iron shot. "I had to get my hands out of my swing," he continued. "I'd been all hands. I've played most of my life with my arms. At the Tournament Players Championship, I began to see some light in what I was doing. You've got to feel that club coming through the ball. Ten days ago, I began to hit the ball well."

At about this point, an Augusta National official came to the microphone and suggested that since so many members of the press had to begin writing their stories, it would probably be best if Nicklaus terminated the mass interview. After that, individual writers gathered around him and asked specific questions.

It had been a historic day, we all knew, but after the easy and natural way Nicklaus talked about it, it was hard to put what had happened in proper perspective. The last round of the tournament had been as thrilling as any I could remember. If Charles Dickens or Alexandre Dumas had written a golf novel, perhaps he would have plotted the final day of a tournament so that it was structured as melodramatically as this one. The 1986 Masters had all the ingredients: The large number of golfers who at the start of the final round had a chance to win the tournament. The rush to the front by Ballesteros on the seventh and eighth. Nicklaus's surprising spurt when he birdied the ninth, tenth, and eleventh. The general feeling after his bogey on the twelfth that the marvellous golf shots he subsequently played probably would not be enough to allow him to overtake Ballesteros. Norman's calamities on the tenth, which appeared to have ended his chances. The sense of finality that Ballesteros' eagle on the thirteenth evoked. The tournament's being turned inside out when Ballesteros' approach on the fifteenth went into the pond. Kite's quiet steadfastness under the rising pressure. The eleven-foot birdie putt on the seventeenth, which put Nicklaus out in front by himself for the first time and eventually won him the tournament. Kite's wonderful effort to birdie the eighteenth, and how close he had come. Norman's gritty reëmergence as a definite threat after he birdied the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth. His badly mis-hit approach shot to the eighteenth, which cost him a chance for a par, a tie, and the possibility of winning in a playoff. Nicklaus triumphant. What a spectacular narrative! They don't write them that way anymore.

A veteran golfer—I have an idea it may have been Paul Runyan—once declared that the only two golfers he knew who could turn it on when they had to were Ben Hogan and Jack Nicklaus. That observation, when one reflects on it, seems sound. For my part, after Nicklaus won his nineteenth major tournament, in the summer of 1980, I thought that he might win a twentieth. More specifically, I thought that if he made the 36-hole cut in a major tournament, his extraordinary ability to compete might enable him to fight his way into contention, and, if the fourth round turned into one of those grim afternoons in which there was a general falling away of the men close to the lead, Nicklaus, with his stubborn resolution, might hold on and win. However, in the tournament I envisaged I saw him winning only because a 71 or a 70 or, at the lowest, a 69 would see him through. One of the most astonishing aspects of Nicklaus's victory at Augusta this April is that never in his career had he come up with such a remarkable final round. He played the last nine in 30: 3-3-4-4-4-3-2-3-4, or birdie, birdie, bogey, birdie, par, eagle, birdie, birdie, par. Since he had also birdied the ninth hole, he played the last ten holes in 33. I don't believe that Nicklaus ever travelled at such a pace down the stretch on the last round of the seventeen stroke-play major tournaments he had previously won. It should be noted, though, that in winning the U.S. Open at Baltusrol in 1967, on his final round Nicklaus played the first nine in a dazzling 31 and the second nine in 34. His 65 gave him a four-round total of 275, four strokes lower than the runner-up.



Over the last few years, Nicklaus's swing had not looked at all the way it did during his finest years. In the nineteen-sixties, the shaft of his club had been well behind his head at the top of the backswing, but in recent years it has been almost over the back of his head. Some of us had wondered whether the outside-in path to the ball that he had learned to use on his short pitch shots under Rodgers' tutelage had not somehow crept into his full swing and put him in such a weak, incorrect position at the top of his backswing that only an exceptional athlete like Nicklaus could have managed to hit the ball even fairly well. At Augusta this spring, his swing looked much more like his old swing. One of the most striking aspects of Nicklaus's long press interview was that he never indicated that he was in the least surprised by the succession of glittering shots he hit or the astonishing putts he holed on his stretch drive. He made only passing allusions to the fact that the club felt good in his hands, and he did not explain just why it was that he had been so confident about his shotmaking. For example, he said that on the thirteenth he wanted to play a 3-wood around the corner off the fairway rather than a driver, and that when he walked onto the thirteenth tee he felt that he could indeed play a 3-wood around the corner. His one reference to his putting, aside from the remarks about reading the line with Jackie or from memory, was the lighthearted comment that "I was so nervous I was able to draw the putter back the way it should go." We should all be that nervous. My guess is that when Nicklaus found he was swinging so well and hitting his shots so solidly he felt that the years had been washed away and he was striking the ball as well as he had in his palmy days. Because of his rare and invaluable temperament, he understood that on the last nine holes he could win the tournament if he could just keep going, and this did not fluster him at all. It was as if he had said to himself, "You've been in this position many times before. You know how to handle it."

As a result of his fantastic performance at Augusta, Jack Nicklaus has now won two United States Amateurs, three British Opens, four U.S. Opens, five P.G.A. Championships, and six Masters tournaments. At forty-six, he is not the oldest golfer ever to win a major tournament. Julius Boros was forty-eight when he won the P.G.A. Championship in 1968. Michael Scott was fifty-five when he won the British Amateur in 1933. What is astounding, and more important, is that Nicklaus won his first major title, the U.S. Amateur, in 1959, and won his latest major title, the Masters, in 1986. That adds up to a span of twenty-seven years. (Those who prefer not to count amateur championships must start with his victory in the 1962 U.S. Open; this shortens the length of his residence in the winner's circle to a mere twenty-four years.) Records, they say, are made to be broken, but I should think that it will be quite some time before a golfer comes along who will match Nicklaus's longevity at the top or carry off twenty major championships.

—HERBERT WARREN WIND

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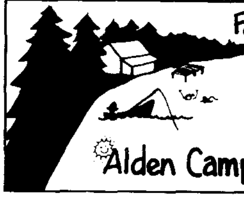
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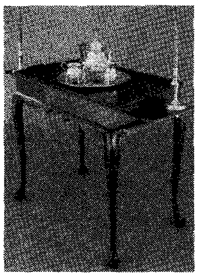
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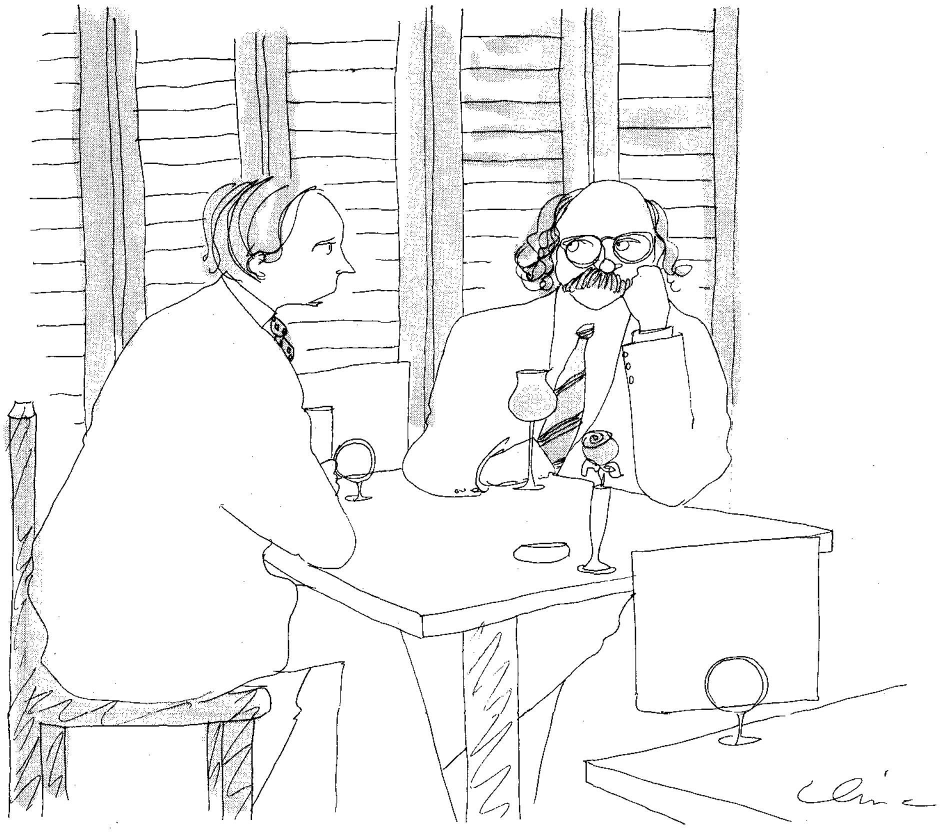
AROUND CITY HALL

EGO SANE STUPEO

THIS city is often thought of as being disrespectful of tradition and ritual and overly choice of its reputation for constantly changing and for featuring the very latest (which it will probably claim to have invented)—as a place, for example, where buildings, hailed when they were new as shining symbols of progress, are routinely torn down only a few years later to make way for something newer and shinier which could also be gone before you know it. It was announced just last month, for instance, that Madison Square Garden, on Eighth Avenue between Thirty-first and Thirty-third Streets, which opened with great hoopla in 1968 and is now often described as having been a lamentable mistake from the start, will be demolished to make way for still another midtown office tower. A new Madison Square Garden (it would be the fifth by that name, although, in what outlanders doubtless see as a further example of local perversity, only the first two were at Madison Square) will then go up several blocks westward in the thirties. So far, there has been no positive response to suggestions in letters-to-the-editor columns that the site of the fourth Garden be used to reconstruct Penn Station, which was torn down to make way for the lamentable mistake.

Though the landscape may change, no one familiar with certain persistent local customs would describe the city as heedless of ritual. Among these customs is the series of annual parades honoring New Yorkers of various ethnic heritages. Weekend after weekend, they march, usually up Fifth Avenue, from early spring to mid-October, which brings the last major event of this kind, the celebration of local Italian-Americans in honor of Columbus Day. At the first of the 1986 parades, that of Irish-Americans, on St. Patrick's Day, the crowds were as big as ever, and the politicians, including Mayor Edward Koch, his arms thrust upward in a familiar, triumphal V sign, turned out in their usual large numbers. Contrary to the fervent hope expressed by Jimmy Breslin in his *Daily News* column the day before—Breslin is one of the Mayor's big non-admirers, and has broken several of the important corruption stories—it did not rain on the Mayor, whom Breslin accused in the same column of favoring the kind of government that confers royalty on the wealthy. ("The city's symbol no longer is the Statue of Liberty, but instead is a limousine double-parked on a Manhattan street, as the police dare not tell it to move.") The Mayor walked beside Benjamin Ward, the city's first black police commissioner, who said, when the two men walked arm in arm at the parade a couple of years ago, "I never realized how political these things are. I used to come to them as a kid, and I never knew they were political at all." The Mayor may have hoped Ward's presence at his side would remind New Yorkers that his relationship with local blacks is far better than many black political leaders claim. But for once the Mayor's supposed failings in this regard were not something that most New Yorkers seemed to have time to give much thought to. St. Patrick's Day is often the occasion for bitter disputes, on and off the parade route, among local Irish-Americans who have different views about how to deal with the troubles in Northern Ireland. The signs saying "Brits Out of Ireland!" were present in force, but even the most ardent supporters of the Provisional Irish Republican Army were relatively unaggressive—sensing, it appeared, that New Yorkers' minds were on other confrontations, especially those between figures in city government and local prosecutors.



"Lately, I've been admitting publicly what I've been feeling privately, and privately I've been feeling a need to watch reruns of 'The Honeymooners.'"

The day before, many of the politicians in the line of march, including the Mayor, had attended the funeral of Donald Manes, the former Queens borough president and Democratic boss of that borough, who had committed suicide on March 13th, during the first phase of the investigation into what are now known as the Great Municipal Scandals of 1986. Before the march, Koch told reporters, "The scandal that is being uncovered at the Parking Violations Bureau in no way intrudes on St. Patrick's Day and the joy and ebullience of that day." The only troubles on his mind, he insisted, had to do with the great potato famine. The Mayor was then saying many times a week that the corruption involved only a single city agency, the Parking Violations Bureau, and that there had been only one indictment—that of the agency's deputy director. Some two dozen city agencies are now under investigation by various levels of

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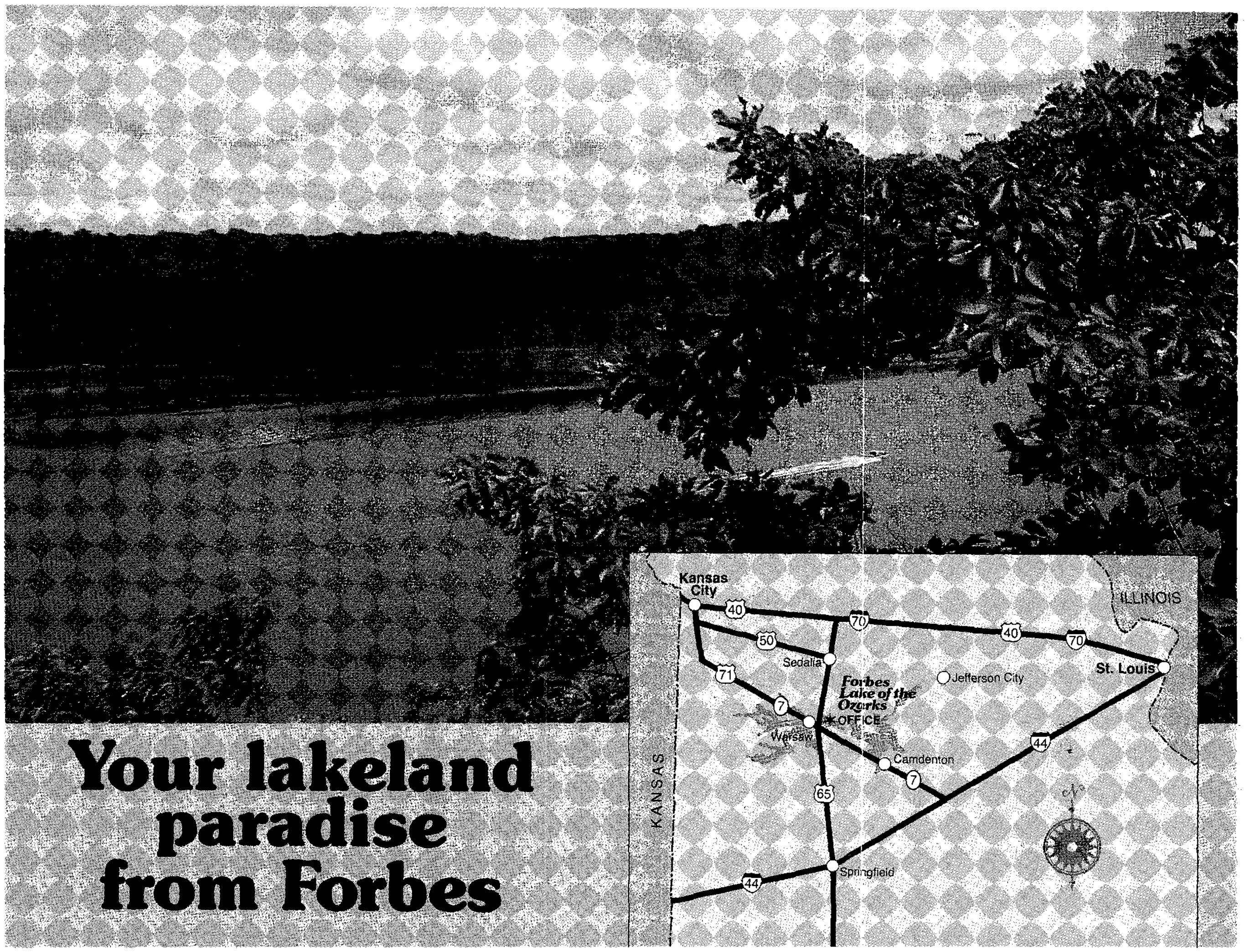

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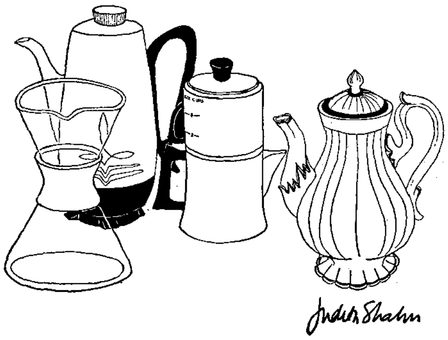
government, and there have been more than a dozen indictments of individuals accused of having turned city government "into a vehicle for the corrupt profit of county leaders, public officials, private businesses, and private businessmen," which was the wording of the May 7th indictment of a group that included Bronx Democratic boss Stanley Friedman. Several people have been arraigned as many as three times, including Friedman, who until last January was one of the Mayor's closest political allies. It is considered a good day at City Hall when there isn't a rumor of another politically embarrassing indictment out of some prosecutor's office, and few doubt that the scandals will still be overshadowing other local concerns long after the Italian-Americans celebrate in October. Late in March, the Mayor, suggesting that the worst was over, declared that the city was "bouncing back." Early last month, he put it another way. He was no longer as depressed as he once was, he told the *Post*, and "if my mood is up, the city's up, to some degree." On May 15th, a fund-raising dinner was held at the Sheraton Centre Hotel to pay off the debt, of more than half a million dollars, left over from last year's campaign for election to a third term, on which Koch spent 7.2 million dollars, or close to nine dollars a vote. The Mayor told the crowd, estimated by his staff at over five hundred (although there were many empty seats, they presumably had been paid for, at a thousand dollars a head, or two thousand for those closest to the Mayor's table), that in the weeks before his inauguration, on January 1st—a time when his popularity and power were surely at their highest—he had laid out an agenda to insure that his third term would be his best yet. ("Then I'll run for a fourth term.") Now, he said, many months of momentum had been lost, because of "a handful, two handfuls, ten or twenty people or so . . . who have engaged in criminality or alleged criminality."

THE scheduling of the city's ethnic parades in the months between early spring and fall has to do with hopes for good weather. Climate plays much less of a role in the timing of another series of local rituals that attract some of the same participants: the annual fund-raising dinners of Democratic and Republican political organizations. Those who show up for these events tend to travel by taxi or limousine—not only the fat-cat heads of real-estate and investment companies (and union officials as well), who find it useful to be on good terms with politicians, but the public officeholders and political bosses. (The Queens Democratic organization leased a gold BMW for Manes's use; now that cries for reform of the political process are heavily in style, John Sabini, Manes's successor as Queens boss, has said that he'll take the subway instead.) "My car and driver are around the corner if I can drop you anyplace" is a line frequently heard at the end of fund-raising dinners at which the speeches have dwelt at length on the plight of the often wheel-less common man. Some time back, leaders of the various local parties apparently came to the mutual decision that the first half of the year is more propitious for fund-raising. Apparently, they also concluded that the most propitious dates were at a discreet distance from April 15th, when potential donors might be in a subversive throw-out-the-rascals—*all* the rascals—frame of mind. New York Republicans generally favor trying to put the arm on people as close as possible to Lincoln's birthday, while the Democrats tend to rake it in later in the season: the annual dinners of the Democratic organizations of the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, and, of course, the Koch deficit special were all held this May. All but the Queens event were held at the Sheraton Centre, at Fifty-second Street and Seventh Avenue, a hotel whose Imperial Ballroom has, in the last few years, become the favored site for large political gatherings, particularly Democratic ones, in this city.

Democratic and Republican leaders' hanging out at their own favorite hotels is nothing new in local politics. Late in the last century, the Republicans' choice was the Fifth Avenue Hotel, at Twenty-third Street on the west side of Madison Square. There the Republican boss Thomas Platt held a meeting of the faithful every Sunday; the meetings were known as his Sunday schools, although the measures that were plotted to foil Democratic opponents, then known collectively as Tammany Hall, were not necessarily in accord with the Scriptures. Platt's political allies were such true believers that the corner of the lobby where they met was known as the Amen Corner. The Democrats' pet watering hole was the Hoffman House, two blocks north on Broadway. These were handy locations. Most indoor political meetings and rallies were then held at Madison Square Garden, at the northeast corner of the square, while outdoor rallies were in the square itself. It was there that, in 1897, stalwart supporters of Richard Croker, then the Tammany boss, did a snake dance, chanting "Well, well, well! Reform has gone to hell!" to celebrate the fact that their forces had defeated a band of reformers who had had the effrontery, three years earlier, to best Tammany at the polls, and thus had had a brief fling at running the city government. It is this tradition of reform movements having but fleeting lives in this city that worries many present-day good-government sorts here. (In Croker's time—and, for that matter, Robert Moses'—they were referred to jeeringly as "goo-goos.") Angered by recent revelations about the way city business has been conducted, they have called for reforms—particularly in the process of letting city contracts, which, it is evident now, has in some cases not been carried out so very differently from the way it was in Croker's day, when it was known as "honest graft." The concern now is that, after a short run, any significant reforms will be diminished not by the clubhouse bosses, whose day may be over, but by, for example, City Hall economic-development specialists' insistence that contracts are often best awarded without competitive bidding—absolutely on merit, of course, and without regard to how much the lucky companies may have contributed to certain politicians' fund-raisers. Otherwise, these experts keep pointing out, New Yorkers will have something else to be worked up about, since hardly anything will get done in city government. Croker liked to say that the people couldn't stand corruption, but "they can't stand reform, either."



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LATIGO GUEST RANCH

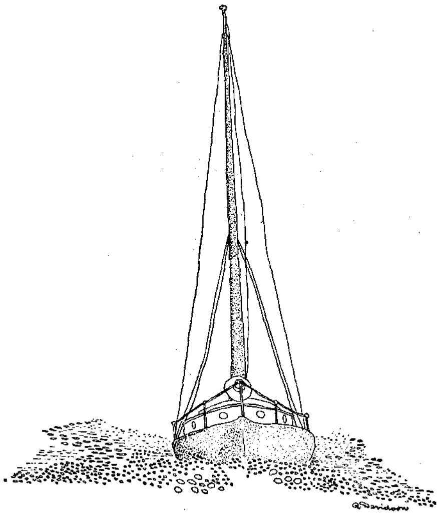
were again cozily juxtaposed, some blocks to the north, in the area just east of Madison Avenue in the Forties. The Democratic headquarters were at the Biltmore, on Forty-third. The Republicans were at the Roosevelt, on Forty-fifth. The name of that hotel was a problem for New York's Republican governor, Thomas E. Dewey, when he ran for President against F.D.R., in 1944. The Republican National Committee resolved things by announcing that its headquarters were "on the tenth floor of the Hotel Theodore Roosevelt." E. B. White's comment in this magazine was "You know, that little old inn on James Madison Avenue." The Democrats' alliance with the Biltmore continued into the seventies; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, for example, announced his candidacy for the United States Senate at the Biltmore, in June, 1976. However, Jimmy Carter's headquarters during the 1976 Democratic National Convention, which was held in Madison Square Garden, were at the Hotel Americana. Although many New York Democratic leaders seem eager to establish that Carter is a political figure they wouldn't follow anywhere, it is at his chosen hotel, which in 1979 became the Sheraton Centre, that they've since raised many a glass—and piles of money. As running for office became hugely expensive and political fund-raising turned into an industry, hotels with large ballrooms came to be the places where politicians most often met. The Democrats' old stamping ground, the Biltmore, was torn down in 1981; in its place is the local headquarters of the Bank of America. The New York County Democratic headquarters are in an office building on East Forty-second Street. The seventy-three-year-old Roosevelt still stands, however, and the New York County Republicans—not at all averse to being known as the traditionalists around here—continue to have their headquarters there, although they hold their annual dinners at the Waldorf. Last month, when Westchester County Executive Andrew O'Rourke formally announced that he would be the Republican candidate for governor against Mario Cuomo, the ceremony was at the Roosevelt.

THE Democratic fund-raisers held here in recent weeks were seen by many as a test of whether the corruption indictments—and, particularly, of whether the accounts of how money contributed to politicians had influenced the awarding of city contracts—would put a damper on ticket sales. Apparently, they did. Though the Mayor cleared enough to pay off his deficit, the night's profit was nothing like the bonanza at his last big fund-raiser, in December, 1984, when, getting ready for his reëlection campaign, he was joined by some fifteen hundred New Yorkers in celebration of his sixtieth birthday, and cleared one million seven hundred thousand dollars in a single night. At the Bronx Democratic dinner, on May 7th, Stanley Friedman—who, *unlike* Manes, did not resign his county leadership when charges of corruption were made against him—said that it had been "a very interesting year for selling tables," and little wonder, since, as he had said a few days before, everyone knew that half a dozen prosecutors were scrutinizing the contributors' list. (Anyone who might have been persuaded to come at the last moment was doubtless discouraged by the fact that a few hours before the dinner United States Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, who is a Republican, had announced Friedman's third indictment. "Republicans in Washington will do everything in their power to embarrass the Democratic Party in New York State," said Friedman.) The message that campaign contributors deserved special gratitude just now was also delivered by the Mayor at his dinner eight days later. He thanked those present for having bought tickets at a time when political contributors are "held up to scorn and pilloried." However, he is making an obvious effort to curb his natural exuberance these days, and, though he was invited to do so, he did not make any disparaging comments about two dozen or so pickets gathered outside the Sheraton Centre, who identified themselves as the Republican Volunteers. They accused him of giving the city away and waved signs that said "King Edward, Abdicate." Of a band of demonstrators outside the Sheraton Centre at his last big fund-raiser, who charged him with neglecting the city's poor people, his comment to reporters was "You didn't recognize them? They're from central casting."

The entertainment at the Koch dinner this year was provided by Peter Allen, who sang two songs of his own composition, and then, turning to the Mayor, announced that he would sing something that he had not written, "to let you know how much we admire you and what you've done for this city." To the bemusement of some in the room—possibly including the Mayor—he launched into the old familiar about a sigh being just a sigh, its being still the same old story, a fight for love and glory, and how the fundamental things apply. At Allen's urging, some of the spectators closest to the stage—that is, in the higher-priced seats—joined in. A favorite Koch word is "jocular," but no one suggested—at least, from near the stage—that there be a rounding up of the usual suspects. Nor did anyone say that he had been shocked, shocked, *shocked* to learn that corruption had been going on in city government—although that had been the approximate theme of many statements out of City Hall in recent months. After Manes's alleged involvement with extortion in the Parking Violations Bureau was revealed, the Mayor said several times that he was shocked, and he professed shock when Stanley Friedman was accused of corruption. In his syndicated column, Murray Kempton, declaring that for three hundred years New York's great seal of the city had not had a civic motto, said that the Mayor had now supplied one: whatever the Latin might be for "I am shocked"—which could be *Ego sane stupeo*.

At the Queens Democratic dinner, on May 14th, only about five hundred people turned up, compared with nine hundred last year, despite the fact that the price had been lowered from two hundred dollars a plate to a hundred and fifty. It was the Queens Democrats' first fund-raising effort since the name of their borough became a national symbol of municipal corruption. So far, no one has suggested that note be taken of the proposal of consultants hired by Hamilton, Ohio, that the town could improve its image by calling itself Hamilton! Changing its name to Queens! would not resolve the borough's present problems. It was privately suggested at the dinner that attendance was down because so many Queens public officials and politicians who would ordinarily have hustled tickets to companies to whom they could offer lucrative city contracts were now unavailable for those duties by reason of indictment. Among those who did attend the dinner was the Mayor, who was rewarded by having his picture on the front page of the *Post* the next day, singing "The Star-Spangled Banner," with his hand on his heart. A number of the Queens officials whom he joined in this demonstration of patriotism were former staunch allies of Manes, who remain in charge at borough hall, having explained that they knew nothing of what had gone on and had been shocked to learn of it. Neither the corruption scandals nor the name of Manes, the so-called former King of Queens, was publicly mentioned during the entire evening; the *Post* headline on its story about the dinner referred to it as "NO-MANES LAND." At the Manes funeral, the Mayor had urged people to remember the former borough president for the good things that he had done, but after the Queens dinner, when he was asked what would have happened if Manes had been alive and present, he said, "I would not be here."

In contrast, the style at Bronx boss Stanley Friedman's dinner was defiance. The Mayor was not among the guests, although he has regularly attended in his years as mayor. Much earlier this year, his campaign staff had asked Citisource, the company in which Friedman was a major stockholder and for which he maneuvered an allegedly fraudulent 22.7-million-dollar city contract, to buy tickets to the Mayor's dinner to pay off his deficit. After various investigations began, the contract was hastily cancelled. Many of the Citisource principals, including Friedman, are now under indictment, and there was no Citisource table at the Mayor's dinner. Attendance at the two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar-a-plate Bronx dinner was down to something over nine hundred, from fifteen hundred last year. Among those who did attend were the real-estate developer Donald Trump, who said, "There is such a thing as loyalty," and former Mayor Abraham Beame, who described the Bronx Democratic boss as "honest, trustworthy, dedicated, and loyal." (He did not add "brave, clean, and reverent.") A number of people recalled that Koch himself, in his book "Mayor," had described Friedman as "one of the smartest, ablest, most loyal people I know." Friedman made fun of the Mayor's practice of treating reports of new investigations of possible corruption by members of his government as "McCarthyism." The master of ceremonies at the dinner was the comedian Joey Adams, who warned the crowd that while they were sitting there "the Mayor's having your cars towed away"—which some took as a bold reference to the continuing investigations of Bronx towing-company contracts with the city. The dais, said Adams, "looks like three hundred and fifty years off for good behavior." And he added, "All I can tell you is if you're indicted, you're invited."



IT is a good thing that New Yorkers know they live in a city with a reputation for constant change, since there have been so many altered circumstances for people here to get used to in the first five months of this year. Members of the Koch administration are surely among the most unsettled of all—not, of course, counting those in or out of City Hall who have reason to think they might be indicted. Early in the year, the word apparently went out to do the Mayor the favor of treating the investigations as lightly—jocularly—as possible. It was revealed that some members of the administration had significant conflict-of-interest problems involving the negotiating of favorable contracts or other concessions with companies in which they held stock or which they planned to go to work for. About that time, Alair Townsend, the deputy mayor for economic development, said she would not work on any project that required her to deal with Macy's, because that would pose a difficulty if she wanted to sign on as a Macy's perfume clerk when she left city government. Mayoral confidants made jokes about most of the alleged corruption's having to do with forms of transportation: the Parking Violations Bureau, the Taxi and Limousine Commission, the city towing operations—even, stretching the point, reports of graft in the Emergency Medical Service, which runs the city's ambulances. After the former president of the Health and Hospitals Corporation was indicted for receiving stock in a company in return for nego-

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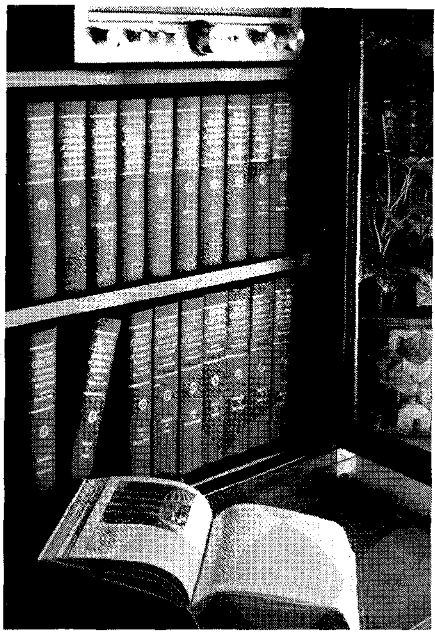

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tiating a million-dollar contract, the joking trailed off, and now that the investigations have spread to the awarding of contracts for school supplies, concrete, city-office leases, sewage-disposal projects, and other areas, the smiles have faded entirely. It is hard to laugh it up when the question most frequently asked about the man you work for is whether he should resign his office—on the ground that if he didn't know of the corruption he should have. "Koch Knew" buttons have sprouted up around town, and the question "Should the Mayor resign?" is now routine in local political interviews. Instead of acting stunned ("Is this some kind of joke?"), as would have been the case early in January, those being interviewed tend to pause and think it over. The answer given by Brooklyn District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman on a recent Sunday was "As a prosecutor, I shouldn't answer that question." Guy Molinari, the Republican member of the House of Representatives from Staten Island, has called on Koch to resign, and has predicted that, in any case, he will not be mayor of the city a year from now. The two men have got on well in the past, although they are of different parties. The Mayor said that Molinari's own daughter, Susan, a member of the City Council, had rejected the call for his resignation. Actually, Miss Molinari had said that her father's suggestion was "premature," and that, in her own case, she would wait for "a few more indictments."

One result of the corruption story is that it is now widely accepted that City Hall is not where things are happening. It is not unheard of nowadays for the Mayor to throw a press conference to which hardly anybody comes but people who work for him. Though City Hall has its regular company of reporters, their attention is often on other matters, often involving criminal law. However, the Mayor's energies do not flag. The *Times* discovered recently that in one day he had presided over four press conferences at which he issued four separate proclamations, in honor of Hispanic Senior Citizens Week, Armed Forces Day, Harbor Festival Week, and World Chess Championship Centennial Week. Few of the ceremonial events on Koch's long daily agenda have any significant relationship to the governing of the city or truly require the Mayor's presence, but they do serve to take a person's mind off the rumors from the prosecutors' offices or the latest opinion polls (one published last week showed Koch's favorable rating down twenty-one points since last December) or the fact that the voices in the Amen Corner are fewer and less devout than they were only a few months ago. Increasingly, the Mayor seems to have discovered that he can have more fun by leaving City Hall for some part of the city where no one would expect to find him. His most successful recent excursion of this sort was joining a bird-watching walk in the Central Park Ramble; he explained, "I've never been on a bird walk before." (Having been given a day's notice, the Parks Department had cleaned up the Ramble, so the Mayor, a notoriously indoors man, didn't get the full outdoor experience.) Pictures of what *Newsday* described as "the balding, gray-striped Koch, a rare breed native only to New York City" made most of the papers the next day; the *Post* published four of them. However, the results of the excursion were not entirely satisfactory. Local cartoonists have treated the Mayor far more savagely than has the press in general during the scandals, and the following day a cartoon by Bay Rigby, in the *Post*, showed the Mayor, with binoculars, staring at the Ramble's birds while a huge vulture, labelled "Corruption," perched on his shoulders and stared back at him.

Fortunately, there is a highly welcome distraction just ahead—the Statue of Liberty's centennial on the four-day July 4th weekend. "When the best city in the world throws the best party in the world, the entire world is invited" was the way Koch put it the other day, adding, "They're stuck with us." Of course, it is not the city but the nation that is throwing the party, and a large share of the over-all planning for the event has been done by people from other parts of the country. However, the Mayor will surely be everywhere that weekend—scooting around the harbor on police boats, flashing his giant V sign from one Tall Ship or another, and basking in the glare of the fireworks. For a few days, it will be just like old times.

—ANDY LOGAN

•

ANTICLIMAX DEPARTMENT

[From the Honolulu Advertiser]

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—The restless Augustine Volcano spewed more ash, gas and steam yesterday, intensifying fears it was building toward a big blast—one that could cause a tidal wave and endanger clam diggers.

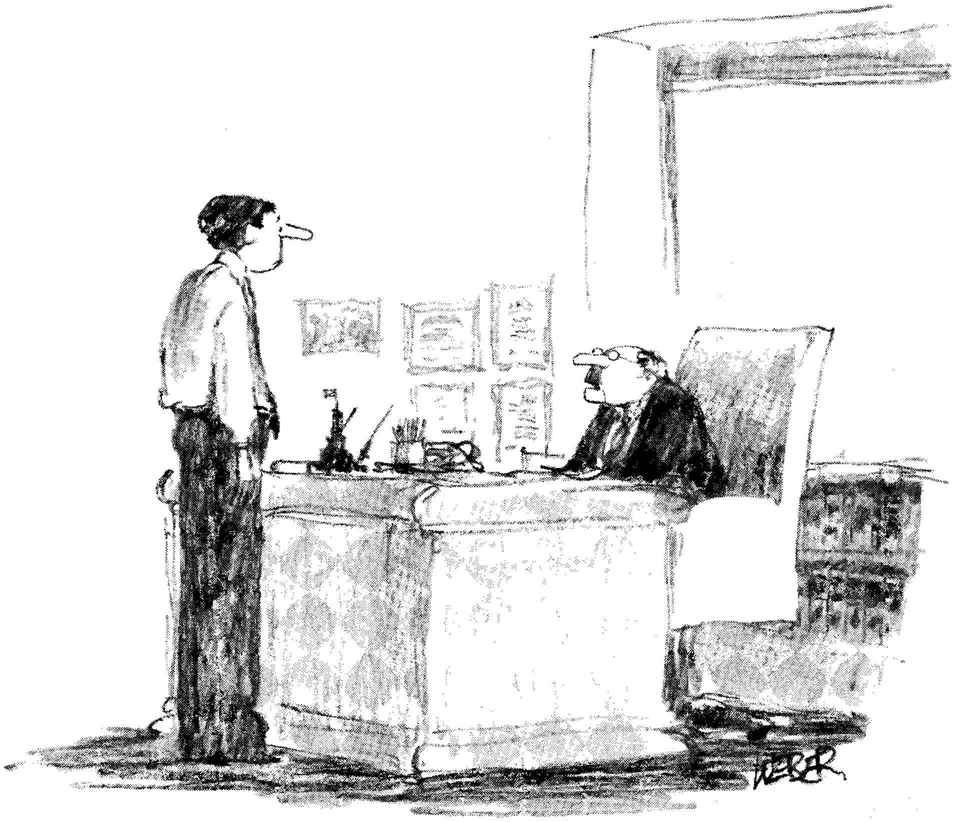
BOOKS

Good Ears

ROBERT STONE'S fourth novel, "Children of Light" (Knopf; $17.95), is designed in a downward curve that begins in cynicism and dissoluteness and ends, a few days later, in degradation and death. It is a narrow book, a kind of sliver work of fiction, and it doesn't have much waste. Most of the book is taken up by hard, savvy, often epigrammatic dialogue interspersed with astringent interior speculation. The heroine, an actress named Lee Verger (née Lu Anne Bourgeois), sums up her life: "You lost it all anyway, Lu Anne thought. You lost the child inside yourself, then the person that grew there, then the children you never bore and the children you did. The boys, the men, the skin outside, the self inside. Feelings came and went like weather. You could not tell if they were real. You could not tell if they were your own. You could never even be sure that you were there. People pretended." A difficult human situation makes her think, "If I could . . . I would emit the darkness inside me like a squid and blind them all and run." The book is a Hollywood novel. It differs, however, from the old bitter, compulsive, tell-it-all model mainly in that it deals not with semi-mythological monsters but with life-size ones. In its implacable way, it doesn't appear to tell secrets or settle grudges or gloat or behave badly. It is a sad, almost reluctant book that gives the impression it might have been pleased to keep silent had not Robert Stone brought it into being.

The book begins and ends in Los Angeles, but most of it takes place in Mexico, where a version of Kate Chopin's "The Awakening" is being filmed. A sensational novel published in 1899, when its author was forty-eight (she died suddenly five years later), "The Awakening" concerns the extramarital affairs of a New Orleans matron named Edna Pontellier. The affairs are unsatisfactory, and at the end of the book Edna goes back to Grand Isle, on the Gulf of Mexico, the scene of her greatest passion, and drowns herself. "Children of Light" has to do with the filming in Baja California of the last scene of the novel. Lee Verger, playing Edna, rides a streetcar to the beach, discards her clothes, and swims out into the Gulf (or Pacific Ocean—the set is a detailed re-creation of Grand Isle). A couple of satisfactory takes are made late Saturday with a storm threatening, and Stone's book goes into its accelerating climax. Lee Verger was once nominated for an Academy Award but has not moved forward since. She has been married for eight years to a psychoanalyst, and has three children; a fourth child died. Born in Louisiana, she has suffered from hallucinations since she was sixteen; she must take medication to function properly. She sinks gratefully and beautifully into the character of Edna, and, to keep her sense of the role clear and free, she stops taking her medication—against her furious husband's wishes. (He and their children are on location with her.) Lu Anne's Long Friends—queer, gossipy, winged netherworld creatures who smell of sweet wine and lavender sachets—reappear to her. Nonetheless, her husband, in accordance with long-made plans, leaves with the children for South Africa to visit his parents. Enter Gordon Walker, a screenwriter and actor whom Lu Anne has loved for years. He has written the script of "The Awakening," and he decides to drive down to the location from Los Angeles. There is nothing salubrious or thoughtful about his decision: "On a whim, he [would travel] to a place where he was without friends to see a woman he had no business to see. There were no other motives of consequence behind his journey." Walker, an alcoholic and a cocaine addict, is a shambles. His wife has left him (they have two gifted sons, seventeen and twenty-one), and he is on a binge. The day after he arrives on location, he draws Lu Anne into his vortex. She is forbidden alcohol and drugs, and she breaks down, as she has done before during the making of a film. The last thirty pages of the book are a noisy tangle of the Bible, "King Lear," and Kate Chopin. They are full of high melodrama, and Stone, who is fearless, nearly gets away with a paragraph like this:

> He turned to her about to speak and saw the lightning flash behind her. The earth shook under him like a scaffold. He saw her raised up, as though she hung suspended between the trembling earth and



"Phelps, I hope I'm not insulting you when I say you're an incompetent nincompoop."

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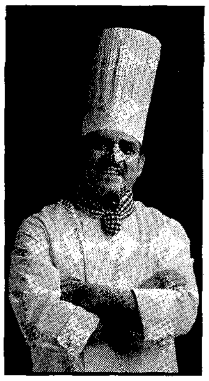
the storm. Her hair was wild, her body sheathed in light. Her eyes blazed amethyst.

Walker and Lu Anne are the heavies in the book, but they refuse to settle on the page, largely because we do not know enough about them. We do not know who or what Walker is, or why he has decided to destroy himself, or why Lu Anne, mad as she is, follows him. (The endless descriptions of drinking and lining cocaine become, as they always do in novels and movies about alcoholics and addicts, self-parodic.) But Stone has great comic fun with the rest of the figures. These include the Drogues, senior and junior. The younger Drogue—sharp, nasty, talented—is regarded as one of the best new directors, and the elder Drogue, a pioneer filmmaker, is full of sardonic wisdom. Also on hand are a famous Mexican painter who fears that his "visions" may end up on every shower curtain in America; an aging comic actress (an unsettling mixture of Lillian Hellman and Eve Arden); a New York writer who falls off the wagon, with disastrous results; a homosexual stuntman; and a publicity man whose occupation has turned him into a blackmailer. Charlie Freitag, the benevolent producer of the movie, gives a cast party Saturday night. The talk is funny and vicious and surreal, and the evening ends in clownish violence. Stone's voice here is fresh and piercing. The party is brilliant work. He should stifle his tendency toward godly musings and carryings on, and let his comic ear go where it will.

MENNA GALLIE'S "In These Promiscuous Parts" (St. Martin's; $15.95) is a small, old-fashioned Welsh-village novel that has a well-oiled plot (art thievery, salmon poaching, hallucinogenic mushrooms, accidental incest, a death), good lyrical prose, and page after jostling page of everyday village talk, clean and dirty. It is a post-Empire novel ("The British Empire is a terrible burden to have to bear, mind, Rosie. We're lucky to have missed it"), and is decorated with chat about bra-lessness and the atomic bomb. The heart of the book, though, is ordinary, timeless life in the village of Trenewydd, where drunkenness, inbreeding, lying, sleeping around, gossip, and minor treacheries of every sort are the daily bread. The plot revolves around Rosie Kendrew, an Oxford historian who comes home on sabbatical to help her



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mother run a by-election and to work on a book. Never a beauty, Rosie relies on her vivacity and humor and outspokenness, and is the opposite of her ancient, rigid, once-beautiful Marxist mother. The book is kept at a boil by Blodwen, who cooks and cleans for old Mrs. Kendrew and keeps her own family and the Kendrews in fresh gossip. Here she is at the local, celebrating with Rosie, who has publicly cleared herself of the hated water bailiff's boasts that she slept with him the night before:

> "Listen, Dafydd bach, you know old Georgie, our Gwen's boy [and the water bailiff]; you wouldn't trust him further than you could throw him, not even in his pram, would you? Right. Whatever he says is a bloody lie, see? And Bert will give you a double to remember that. Charge it to Rosie, Bert, she's better off than me." Blodwen downed her drink in two positive gulps. "Rosie, don't order anymore, for God's sake, your mother's on the rampage. You've been sitting here enjoying the kick of victory, but don't kick your friends in the arse. You've let me down. You forgot to dust her room yesterday, and she went and wrote *Dust* in the powder on her dressing table for me to see. You promised, cross your heart."

There is very little quaintness in Menna Gallie. —WHITNEY BALLIETT

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

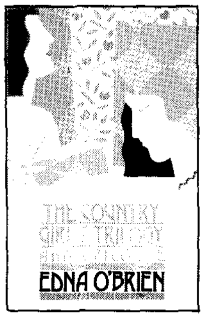
TABLE MONEY, by Jimmy Breslin (Ticknor & Fields; $17.95). A young honored veteran of Vietnam, an Irish-American Catholic, a native of the Borough of Queens, and a sandhog by family tradition, comes off shift in the late afternoon and drops into a bar for a relaxing beer and a shot of rye. Later—many hours later—he is still there, with his pack of cigarettes, his little pile of coins and bills, his umpteenth drink, and his empty gaze. His young wife, with their baby daughter, is at home, waiting. This is not the first time this has happened. Eventually, she knows, he will come stumbling in, dump what is left of his pay on the kitchen table, and fall into bed. Owney Morrison is such a man, and he and his wife, Dolores, stand at the center of Mr. Breslin's new novel. They are framed there by their milieu: the blue-collar Irish neighborhoods of Queens, with their spotless houses and rigid occupants; the relentless church on the corner and the cheerless bar across the street; the men who think with their fists, and the women who tremble at the sight of a black man. It is a culture familiar to Mr. Breslin from birth, his depiction is comprehensive, and he all but rubs the reader's nose in it.

1933 WAS A BAD YEAR, by John Fante (Black Sparrow; $14 cloth, $8.50 paper). A beautiful edition of a stunning short novel, set in a Colorado town, about a teen-aged southpaw who reeks of the liniment with which he lovingly lubricates The Arm, as he respectfully refers to that limb. "If the Lord created me out of a poor bricklayer," he says, "he hung me with jewels when he hinged that whizzer to my collarbone." Daydreams about a four-part biography by Damon Runyon in the *Saturday Evening Post* ("Triumph Over Adversity, The Life of Dominic Molise") and about imminent conversations around the Chicago Cubs' breakfast table ("Lotta moola for a seventeen year old." "For a twenty-five game winner? Hell, we stole him") might make his current obscurity tolerable, were it not for his father's plans to apprentice him. By the end, tragedy is at bat, as it were, with the bases loaded. John Fante, born in Colorado in 1909, was prolific in the nineteen-thirties; he died in 1983. Black Sparrow published his "Dreams from Bunker Hill" in 1982.

NOTE: "One Way or Another," a collection of stories by Peter Cameron, has been published by Harper & Row ($15.95). Many of the stories first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

ORIGINS OF LIFE, by Freeman Dyson (Cambridge; $7.95). In 1985, Freeman Dyson was invited to give the four Tarner Lectures, in the philosophy of science, at Cambridge University; this extraordinarily interesting book is based on them. Mr. Dyson makes a convincing case for the prospect that life began twice. The first beginning, he suggests, was the generation of nonreplicating units that could reproduce, or simply divide into daughter cells. The next stage, which would have occurred much later, was units that could replicate, or produce identical copies of themselves. This is a much more delicate affair, and Mr. Dyson points out difficulties in theories that assume it was a first stage. His discussion is both elegantly written and extremely clear. A nonmathematical



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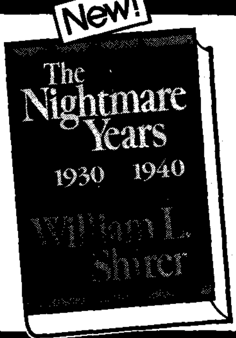

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reader may have some trouble with the third lecture, but any reader will find enough in the book to make it worth the effort.

KRAZY KAT: THE COMIC ART OF GEORGE HERRIMAN, by Patrick McDonnell, Karen O'Connell, and Georgia Riley de Havenon (Abrams; $27.50 cloth, $14.95 paper). A biography and a generous selection of the drawings of George Herriman (1880-1944), who created the newspaper strip Krazy Kat. An appreciative essay on the famous cat and his amorous misadventures, written in 1924 by Gilbert Seldes, serves as an introduction. Although Krazy Kat has not been seen in public since Herriman's death, the strip has taken a special place in the history of art—comic and upper-case. Among Krazy Kat's avowed devotees have been H. L. Mencken, Willem de Kooning, Pablo Picasso, Saul Steinberg, E. E. Cummings, and Woodrow Wilson. The book reproduces full-page Sunday newspaper strips, many of them in color. Against the background of the Arizona desert are played out myriad variations of the story—Krazy Kat is enamored of Ignatz Mouse, who reciprocates by heaving a brick at the Kat's head, prompting the policeman, Offissa Pupp, to do his duty and clap the Mouse in jail. Once again, we may take joy in Herriman's superb draftsmanship, in the poetry and humanity of his little world, and in the atmosphere of pure love that Krazy Kat expressed in saying, dreamily, "In my Kosmis there will be no feeva of discord . . . All my immotions will function in hominy and kind feelings."

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WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE DEPT.

[*From the 37th Division Veterans' News*]

The highlights of the earlier reunions were to socialize and "shoot the bull" about times past, and especially about the Fiji Islands, Guadalcanal, New Georgia, Bougainville and the Philippine Islands. With the passage of time the war buddy friendships became familiar in nature, so that the wives now also look forward with anxiety to the next reunion.

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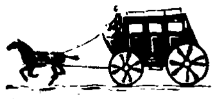

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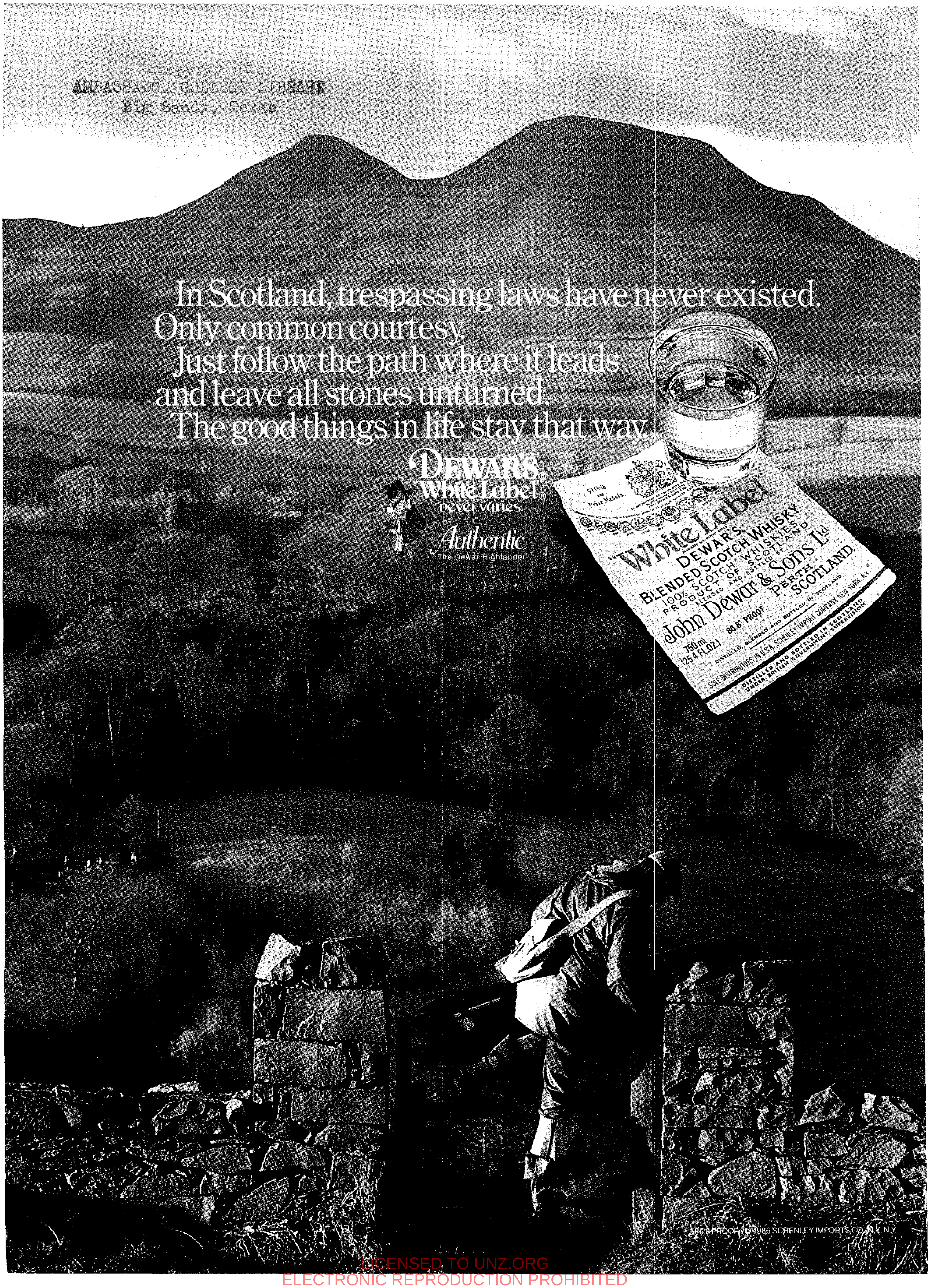
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